



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

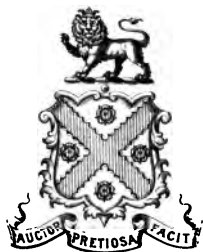
We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

LEDGEX LIBRARY



Bancroft Collection.
Purchased in 1893.

~ 4

1



2





CHAUCER VOL. III.
 — on the grent he saw sitting a Wif
 A fonder wight ther may no man devise
The Wife of Bath's Tale, l. 830

Woodcut del.

London Printed for John Bell British Library Decem^r

THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
GEOFF. CHAUCER.

IN FOURTEEN VOLUMES.

THE MISCELLANEOUS PIECES

From Urry's Edition 1721,

THE CANTERBURY TALES

From Tyrwhitt's Edition 1775.

Grete well CHAUCER whan ye mete----

Of ditees and of songes glade,

The which he----made,

The londe fullfild is over all.

GOWER.

My maister CHAUCER----chiefe poete of Bretayne----

Whom all this londe schulde of ryght preferre,

Slth of our langage he was the lode-sterre----

That made first to dysylle and rayne

The gold dewe dropys of speche and eloquence

Into our tunge through his excellence.

LYDGATE.

The honour of English tong is dede----

My mayster CHAUCER, floure of eloquence,

Mirrou of fructuous entendement,

Univerfel fadir in science----

This londis verray tresour and richeffe----

The firste fynder of our fayre langage.

OCCLEVE.

Venerabill CHAUCER, principall poete but pere,

Hevinly trumpet, orlege and requiere,

In eloquence balme, condic^t and diall,

Mylky fountane, clere strand, and rais riall,

Of fresche endite throw Alboun iland braild.

DOUGLAS.

O reverend CHAUCER! rose of rethouris all,

As in oure young flour imperial

That raise in Brittain evir, quha reidis right

Thou helris of Makers the triumphs royall,

The fresche enamilt termes celestiall:

This mater couth half illuminat full bright,

Was thou nocht, of our Ing^lis all the light,

Surmounting every young terrestriall

As far as Mavi's morrow dois midnight.

DUNBAR.

VOL. III.

EDINBURG:

AT THE Apollo Press, BY THE MARTINS.

Anno 1782.



THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
GEOFFREY CHAUCER.

VOL. III.

CONTAINING HIS

CANTERBURY TALES, viz.

THE WIFE OF BATH'S TALE,	THE CLERKES TALE,
THE FRERES TALE,	THE MARCHANTES TALE,
THE SOMPNOURES TALE,	THE SQUIERES TALE,
&c. &c. &c.	

But natheles certain
I can right now no thrifty Tale sain,
But CHAUCER, (though he can but lewedly
On metres and on ryming craftily)
Hath sayd hem in swiche English as he can
Of olde time, as knoweth many a man;
And if he have not sayd hem, leve brother,
In o book, he hath sayd hem in another----
Who so that wol his large Volume seke. TALES, ver. 4465.

Dan CHAUCER, well of English undefil'd,
On Fame's eternal head-roll worthy to be fil'd----
Old Dan Geffrey, in whose gentle spright
The pure well-head of poetry did dwell----
He whilst he lived was the soveraigne head
Of shepherds all-----

SPENSER.

Old CHAUCER, like the morning star,
To us discovers day from far;
His light those mists and clouds dissolv'd
Which our dark nation long involv'd;
But he descending to the shades
Darkness again the age invades.

DENHAM.

CHAUCER, him who first with harmony inform'd
The language of our fathers--- His legends blithe
He sang of love or knighthood, or the wiles
Of homely life, thro' each estate and age
The fashions and the follies of the world
With cunning hand portraying-----
Him who in times-----

Dark and untaught began with charming verse
To tame the rudeness of his native land.

AKENSIDE.

EDINBURG:

AT THE Apollo Press, BY THE MARTINS.

Anno 1782.

THE
BROW LACINOT
OF
AND YETTER
CHAMBER

THE

THE



THE CANTERBURY TALES.

THE WIF OF BATHE PROLOGUE.

EXPERIENCE, though non au&oritee
Were in this world, is right ynough for me
To speke of wo that is in mariage; 5585
For, Lordings, sin I twelf yere was of age
(Thanked be God that is eterne on live)
Husbondes at chirche dore have I had five,
(If I so often might han wedded be)
And all were worthy men in hir degree. 5590

†. 5583.] I have already given my reasons for following the best mss. in placing this Prologue of 'The Wife of Bathe next to The Man of Lawes Tale, *Discourse*, &c. § 16. The want of a few verses to connect this Prologue with the preceding Tale was perceived long ago, and the defect was attempted to be supplied by the author of the following lines, which in ms. *B.* are prefixed to the common Prologue;

Ouse Oost gas tho to loke up anon.
Gode men, quod he, herkeneth everichone,
As evere mote I drynke wyn or ale
This Marchant hath itold a mery Tale,
Howe Januarie hadde a lither jape,
His wyf put in his hood an ape.
But hereof I wil leve off as now.
Dame Wyf of Bathe, quod he, I pray you
Telle us a Tale now nexte after this.
Sir Oost, quod she, so God my soule bliþ
As I fully thereto wil consente,
And also it is myn hole entente
To done yow alle disporte as that I cau.
But holde me excused; I am a woman:
I can not reherse as these clerkes kune.
And ryt anon she hath hir Tale bygunne.
Experience, &c.

The same lines are in mss. *Bod.* C. and Z. I print them here in order to justify myself for not inserting them in the text.

But me was told, not longe time ago is,
 That sithen Crist he went never but onis
 To wedding in the Cane of Galilee,
 That by that ilke ensample taught he me
 That I ne shulde wedded be but ones. 5595

Lo, herke eke, which a sharp word for the nones,
 Beside a welle Jesu God and man
 Spake in represe of the Samaritan;
 Thou hast yhadde five husbonds, sayde he,
 And thilke man that now hath wedded thee 5600
 Is not thyn husbond. Thus said he certain,
 What that he ment therby I can not sain;
 But that I aske why that the fifthe man
 Was non husbond to the Samaritan?
 How many might she have in mariage? 5605
 Yet herd I never tellen in min age
 Upon this noumbre diffinitoun;
 Men may devine and glosen up and down.

But wel I wot expresse withouten lie
 God had us for to wex and multiplie; 5610
 That gentil text can I wel understond:
 Eke wel I wot he sayd that min husbond
 Shuld leve fader and moder and take to me;
 But of no noumbre mention made he
 Of bigamie or of octogamie; 5615
 Why shuld men than speke of it vilanie?

Lo here the wise King, Dan Salomon,
I trow he hadde wives mo than on,

As wolde God it shal were to me . . .
 To be refreshed half so oft as he) . . . 5610
 Which a gift of God had he for alle his wives?
 A man hath swiche that in this world an live in
 God wot this nobles king, as to my witte,
 The firste night had many a merry sitte
 With eche of hem, so wel was him an live . . . 5615
 Blessed be God that I have wedded five;
 Welcome the sixth when that ever he shall;
 or fith I wol not kepe me chaste in all,
 When min husband is fro the world ygone
 om Cristen man shal wedden me anon; . . . 5630
 or than the apostle saith that I am fre
 to wedde a' Goddes half wher it liketh me;
 He saith that to be wedded is no sinne;
 better is to be wedded than to be yene.

What rekkeoth me though folk say vilanie . . . 5635
 Of shrewed Lameoth and his bigamie?

* 5616. *I have wedded five*] After this verse the six follow-
 ing are in mss. G. 3, B. 1. C. 2, and in edit. G. 2;

Of whiche I have gyfth out the best
 Bothe of here nyther pure and of here chaste.
 Diverse lodes maken partyt clerke,
 And diverse prayke in many fondry wekes
 Maken the werkman partyt sekirly:

Of five husbands (quoting am 3,
 Welcome the sixth, &c.

If these lines are not Chaucer's they are certainly more in his
 manner than the generality of the imitations of him. Perhaps
 he wrote them, and afterwards blotted them out. They come
 in but awkwardly here, and he has used the principal idea in
 another place, *March: T. ver. 9301.*

I wot wel Abraham was an holy man,
 And Jacob eke, as far as ever I can,
 And eche of hem had wives mo than two,
 And many another holy man also. 5640

Wher can ye seen in any maner age
 That highe God defended mariage
 By expresse word? I pray you telleth me,
 Or wher commanded he virginitee?

I wot as wel as ye, it is no drede, 5645
 The apostle, whan he spake of maidenhede,
 He said that precept therof had he non;
 Men may conseille a woman to ben on,
 But consailing is no commandement;
 He put it in our owen jugement. 5650

For hadde God commanded maidenhede,
 Than had he dampned wedding out of drede;
 And certes if ther were no fede yfowe
 Virginitee than wherof shuld it growe?

Poule dorste not commanden at the lest 5655
 A thing of which his maister yaf non hest.
 The dart is sette up for virginitee,
 Catch who so may, who renneth best let see.
 But this word is not take of every wight,
 But ther as God wol yeve it of his might. 5660

I wot wel that the apostle was a maid,
 But natheles, though that he wrote and said
 He wold that every wight were swiche as he,
All n'is but conseil to virginitee.

THE OF BATHES PROLOGUE;

a wif he yaf me leue, 5665
 fo n'is it non repreue
 ; if that my make die,
 ption of bigamie ;
 d no woman for to touche,
 his bed or in his couche) 5670
 h fire and tow to assemble ;
 t this ensample may resemble.
 nd som, he held virginitee
 an wedding in freelte :
 e I, but if that he and she 5675
 lves all in chastitee)
 l, I have of non envie
 ed preferre to bigamie ;
 to be clene in body and gost :
 wol not maken boft. 5680
 know a lord in his household
 very vessell all of gold :
 e; and don hir lord service.
 lke to him in sondry wise,

*unt it wel, I have non envie—Though maiden-
 mie]* So these two verses stand, without any
 ce, in all the mss. If they are right we must
 rre to signify the same as *be preferred to*.
 mple of such a construction I have ventured
 of the text. It might have been as well, per-
 ft the first line untouched, and to have cor-
 d only thus ;

idenhed be preferr'd to bigamie.

d in his household] See 2 Tim. ii. 20.

And everich hath of God a propre gift, 5685
Som this, som that, as that him liketh shift.

Virginitee is gret perfection,

And continence eke with devotion;

But Crist, that of perfection is welle,

Ne bade not every wight he shuld go selle 5690

All that he had and yeve it to the poure,

And in swiche wise follow him and his lore:

He spake to hem that wold live parfitly,

And, Lordings, (by your leve) that am nat I:

I wol bestow the flour of all myn age 5695

In th' ades and the fruit of mariage.

Tell me also to what conclusion

Were membres made of generation,

And of so parfit wise a wight ywrought? 5699

Trusteth me wel they were nat made for nought.

Glose who so wol, and say bothe up and down,

That they were made for purgation

Of urine, and of other thinges smale,

And eke to know a female from a male:

And for non other cause? say ye no? 5703

The experience wot wel it is not so.

So that the clerkes be not with me wroth

I say this, that they maked ben for both,

This is to sayn, for office and for ese

Of engendrure, ther we not God displese. 5710

Why shuld men elles in hir bookes sette

That man shal yelden to his wif hire dette?

Now wherwith shuld he make his payement
If he ne used his sely instrument ?

Than were they made upon a creature 5715
To purge urine, and eke for engendrure.

But I say not that every wight is hold,
That hath swiche harneis as I to you told,
To gon and usen hem in engendrure;
Than shuld men take of chastitee no cure. 5720

Crist was a maide, and shapen as a man,
And many a seint, sith that this world began,
Yet lived they ever in parfit chastitee ?

I n'ill envie with no virginitee.
Let hem with bred of pure whete be fed, 5725
And let us wives eten barly bred :

And yet with barly bred, Mark tellen can,
Our Lord Jesu refreshed many a man.
In swiche estat as God hath cleped us
I wol persever, I n'am not precious. 5730

In wifhode wol I use min instrument
As frely as my Maker hath it sent.
If I be dangerous God yeve me forwe,
Min husbond shal it have both even and morwe,
Whan that him list come forth and pay his dette. 5735

An husbond wol I have, I wol not lette,
Which shal be both my dettour and my thrall,
And have his tribulation withall
Upon his flesh, while that I am his wif.
I have the power during all my lif 5740

Upon his propre body and nat he;
 Right thus the apostle told it unto me,
 And bad our husbands for to love us wel:
 All this sentence me liketh every del.

Up stert the Pardoner, and that anon; 5745
 Now, Dame, quod he, by God and by Seint John
 Ye ben a noble prechour in this cas :
 I was about to wed a wif, alas!
 What? shuld I bie it on my flesh so dere?
 Yet had I lever wed no wif to-yere. 5750

Abide, quod she, my Tale is not begonne;
 Nay, thou shalt drinken of another tonne,
 Er that I go, shal favor worse than ale:
 And whan that I have told thee forth my Tale
 Of tribulation in mariage, 5755
 Of which I am expert in all min age,
 (This is to sayn myself hath ben the whippe).
 Than maieft thou chesen wheder thou wolt sippe
 Of thilke tonne that I shal abroche:
 Beware of it er thou to neigh approche, 5760
 For I shal tell ensamples mo than ten.
 Who so that n'ill beware by other men
 By him shal other men corrected be:
 Thise same wordes writeth Ptholomee,

¶. 5764. *writeth Ptholomee*] In the margin of ms. C. 1 is the following quotation: "Qui per alios non corrigitur, alii per ipsum corrigitur:" but I cannot find any such passage in The Almageste. I suspect that The Wife of Bathes copy of Ptolemy was very different from any that I have been able to meet with. See another quotation from him, ver. 7906.

Rede in his Almajeste, and take it there. 5765

Dame, I wold pray you, if your will it were,
Sayde this Pardoner, as ye began
Tell forth your Tale, and spareth for no man,
And techeth us yonge men of your practike.

Gladly, quod she, sin that it may you like. 5770
But that I pray to all this compaignie,
If that I speke after my fantasie,
As taketh not a greefe of that I say,
For min entente is not but for to play.

Now, Sires, than wol I tell you forth my Tale. 5775
As ever mote I drinken win or ale
I shal say soth, the hufbondes that I had
As three of hem were good and two were bad.
The three were goode men and riche and olde;
Unnethes mighten they the statute holde 5780
In which that they were bounden unto me;
Ye wot wel what I mene of this parde.
As God me helpe I laugh whan that I thinke
How pitoussly a-night I made hem swinke,
But by my say I tolde of it no store : 5785
They had me yeven hir lond and hir trefore ;
Me neded not do lenger diligence
To win hir love or don hem reverence.
They loved me so wel by God above
That I ne tolde no deintee of hir love. 5790

A wise woman wol besie hire ever in on
To geten hir love ther as she hath non.

have no thrifty cloth.
at my neigheboures hous?

5820

art thou so amorous?
thou with our maide? *benedicite!*
ur, let thy japes be.

a goffib or a frend,
:) thou chideft as a fctnd

5825

r play unto his hous.
some as dronken as a mous,

en hem on bond] shall make them believe
ood. The latter words may either signify
or made of wood: which of the two is the
tion it will be safest not to determine till
old story to which this phrase seems to be

: *Raynard*] *Caglard of clemens*

And precheſt on thy benche with evil preſe :
 Thou ſayſt to me, It is a gret meſchiefe 5830
 To wed a poure woman for coſtage ;
 And if that ſhe be riche of high parage,
 Than ſayſt thou that it is a tourmentrie
 To ſoffre hire pride and hire melancolie :
 And if that ſhe be faire, thou veray knave, 5835
 'I thou ſayſt that every holour wol hire have ;
 She may no while in chaſtitee abide
 That is aſſailed upon every ſide.
 Thou ſayſt ſom folk deſire us for richeſſe,
 Som for our ſhape, and ſom for our fairneſſe, 5840
 And ſom for ſhe can eyther ſing or dance,
 And ſom for gentilleſſe and daliance,
 Som for hire hondes and hire armes ſmale :
 Thus goth all to the devil by thy tale.
 Thou ſayſt men may not kepe a caſtel wal, 5845
 It may ſo long aſſailed be over al.
 And if that ſhe be ſoul, thou ſayſt that ſhe
 Coveteth every man that ſhe may ſee ;
 For as a ſpaniel ſhe wol on him lepe
 Til ſhe may finden ſom man hire to chepe. 5850
 Ne non ſo grey goos goth ther in the lake
 (As ſayſt thou) that wol ben withoute a make :
 And ſayſt it is an hard thing for to welde
 A thing that no man wol his thanks helde.

Thus ſayſt thou, lorel, whan thou goſt to bed, 5855
And that no wiſe man nedeth for to wed,

entendeth unto heven.
 nder dint and firy leven
 d nekke be to-broke.
 at dropping houses and eke smoke,
 ves, maken men to flee 5861
 hous. A, *benedicite!*
 che an old man for to chide?
 e wives wol our vices hide
 nd than we wol hem shewe. 5865
 e a proverbe of a shrewe.
 at oxen, asses, hors, and houndes,
 lat diverse stoundes,
 s, or that men hem bie,
 and all swiche husbondrie, 5870
 es, clothes, and aray,
 s maken non assay
 dded, olde dotard shrewe,
 thou, we wol our vices shewe.
 so that it displefeth me 5875
 wolt preisen my beautee,
 ore alway upon my face,
 aire Dame in every place;
 ake a feste on thilke day
 e, and make me fresh and gay; 5880
 o to my norice honour,
 nberere within my bour,

verz] A chambermaid, Fr. See 8695, 8853;

la chambrière,

la nourrice

doult n'est nice.

Rom. de la R. 14480.

B iij

85

890

od,
5896

the same right parde :
 to ynough thee thar not plainen thee.
 sayst also if that we make us gay
 hing and with precious array 5920
 peril of our chastitee :
 with forwe thou enforcest thee,
 thise wordes in the apostles name;
 ade with chastitee and shame
 I shul appareile you, (quod he) 5925
 I tressed here and gay perrie,
 ne with gold, ne clothes riche.
 y text ne after thy rubriche
 I ork as mochel as a gnat.
 also I walke out like a cat; 5930
 wolde fenge the cattes skin
 he cat wel dwellen in him in

O THE WIF OF BATHES PROLOGUE.

This is to say, If I be gay, fire shrewe,
 wol renne out my borel for to shewe:
 ire olde fool, what helpeth thee to spien?
 Though thou pplay Argus with his hundred eyen 5940
 to be my wardecorps, as he can best,
 a faith he shal not kepe me but me lest:
 et coude I make his berd, so mote I the.

Thou sayest eke that ther ben thinges three,
 Which thinges gretly troublen all this erthe, 5945
 and that no wight ne may endure the ferthe:
 O lefe fire shrewe, Jesu short thy lif.

Yet prechest thou, and sayst, An hateful wif
 likened is for on of thise meschances,
 be ther non other maner resemblances 5950
 that ye may liken your parables to
 but if a fely wif be on of tho?

Thou likenest eke womans love to helle,
 So barrein lond ther water may not dwelle.

Thou likenest it also to wilde fire; 5955
 The more it brenneth the more it hath desire
 So consume every thing that brent wol be.

Thou sayest right as wormes shende a tre
 Right so a wif destroiet hie husbond;
 This knowen they that ben to wives bond. 5960

Lordings, right thus, as ye han understood,
 Bare I ffly min old husbondes on hond,
 That thus they saiden in hir dronkenesse;
and all was false but as I toke witnesse

On Jankin, and upon my necke, when hee had
 O Lord! the paine I did him: and the wretched
 For giltyes, by Goddes sweete grace, was made
 For as an horse I coude hitte and whinne, and woe
 I coude plain, and I was in the gilty, and vnyne
 Or elles oftentimes I had bene spilt. blow guine 5970
 Who so first cometh to the mill hee grins;
 I plained first, so was our wretched state
 They were so glad to excuse him, but blide
 Of thing the which they neuer agift his liue
 Of wenches wold I beren him on hand, blow guine 5975
 What that for fewe unethers might they stand,
 Yet like I his herte for that hee
 Wend that I had of him so gret ellistes
 I swore that all my walking out by night
 Was for to espie wenches that hee might
 Under that colour had I many a night, blow guine 5980
 For all swiche wit is yeven us knowe birde
 Deceite, weping, plaining, God hath yeven
 To women kindly while that they may liuen:
 And thus of this thing I may auenture me, blow guine 5985
 At th' ende I had the boter in eche degree
 By sleight, or force, or by some manner thing,
 As by continual weeping, or grutching,
 Namely a-bed; ther hadden they meschance;
 Ther wold I chide, and don him no plesance: 5990
 I wold no longer in the bed abide
 If that I felt his arm over my side,

Til he had made his raunson unto me,
 Than wold I soffre him do his nicetee :
 And therfore every man this Tale I tell, 59
 Winne who so may, for all is for to sell.
 With empty hond men may no haukes lurt;
 For winning wold I all his lust endure,
 And maken me a feined appetit,
 And yet in bacon had I never delit, 60
 That maketh me that ever I wold hem chide;
 For though the Pope had fitten hem beside
 I wold not spare hem at hir owen bord,
 For by my trouthe I quitte hem word for word.
 As helpe me veray God omnipotent, 61
 Tho I right now shuld make my testament,
 I ne owe hem not a word that it n'is quit;
 I brought it so abouten by my wit
 That they must yeve it up as for the best,
 Or elles had we never ben in rest;
 For though he loked as a wood leon
 Yet shuld he faille of his conclusion.

'Than wold I say, Now, goode lefe, take h
 How mekely loketh Wilkin oure shepe!
 Come ner my spouse, and let me ba thy che'
 Ye shulden be al patient and meke,
 And han a swete spiced conscience,
 Bith ye so preche of Jobes patience.
Suffreth alway sin ye so wel can preche,
And but ye do, certain we shal you tech

That it is faire to han a wif in pees.
 On of us two most bowen doutelees;
 And fith a man is more resonable
 Than woman is ye mosten ben suffrable.
 What aileth you to grutchen thus and grone? 6025
 Is it for ye wold have my queint alone?
 Why take it all; ho, have it every del:
 Peter, I shrew you but ye love it wel;
 For if I wolde sell my *belle chose*.
 I coude walke as freshe as is a rose, 6030
 But I wol kepe it for your owen toth.
 Ye be to blame, by God I say you soth.

Swiche maner wordes hadden we on hond.
 Now wol I speken of my of fourthe husband.

My fourthe husbonde was a revellour, 6035
 This is to sayn, he had a paramour,
 And I was yonge and ful of ragerie,
 Stibborne and strong, and joly as a pie;
 Tho coude I dancen to an harpe smale,
 And sing ywis as any nightingale, 6040
 Whan I had dronke a draught of swete wine.
 Metelljus, the foule cherle, the swine,
 That with a staf beraft his wif hire lif
 For she drank wine, though I had ben his wif
 Ne shuld he not have daunted me fro drinke; 6045
 And after wine of Venus most I thinke;

*. 6042. *Metellius*] This story is told by Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*
 l. xiv. c. 13, of one Mecenius; but Chaucer probably followed
Valerius Maximus, l. vi. c. 3.

For al so liker as cold engendreth hayl
 A likerous mouth most han a likerous tayl
 In woman vinolent is flo defence,
 This knowen lecheours by experience. 6050

But, Lord Crist! whan that it remembreth me
 Upon my youth, and on my jolitee,
 It tikeleth me about myn herte rote;
 Unto this day it doth myn herte bote,
 That I have had my world as in my tyme. 6055
 But age, alas! that all wol envenime,
 Hath me beraft my beautes and my pith;
 Let go, farewel, the devil go therwith!
 The flour is gon, ther n'is no more to tell;
 The bren as I best may now mooste I sell, 6060
 But yet to be right mery wol I fond.
 Now forth to tellen of my fourthe husband.

I say I had in herte gret despit
 That he of any other had delit:
 But he was quit by God and by Seint Jooe: 6065
 I made him of the same wood a croce,
 Not of my body in no soule manere,
 But certainly I made folk swiche chere
 That in his owen grese I made him frie
 For anger and for veray jalousie. 6070
 By God, in erth I was his Purgatorie,
 For which I hope his soule be in glorie:

*. 6049. In woman vinolent] Rom. de la R. 14222;

Car puique femme est enivre
 Et n'a point en soy de defence.—

*. 6065. Seint Jooe] Or Jesse. Sanctus Judocus was a saint of
 cathieu, *Vocab. Hagiol.* prefixed to Menage, Etymol. Fr.

For, God it wote, he fate ful oft and songe
 Whan that his sho ful bitterly him wronge;
 Ther was no wight, save God and he, that wiste
 In many a wise how fore that I him twiste. 6076
 He died whan I came fro Jerusalem,
 And lith ygrave under the rode-beem;
 All is his tombe not so curious
 As was the sepulcre of him Darius, 6080
 Which that Appelles wrought so sotelly:
 It is but wast to bury hem preciously.
 Let him farewell, God give his soule rest,
 He is now in his grave and in his chest.

Now of my fifthe husbonde wol I telle: 6085
 God let his soule never come in helle:
 And yet was he to me the moste shrew;
 That fele I on my ribbes all by rew,
 And ever shal unto min ending day:
 But in our bed he was so fresh and gay, 6090
 And therwithall he coude so wel me glose,
 Whan that he wolde han my *belle chose*,
 That though he had me bet on every bon
 He coude win agen my love anon.
 I trow I loved him the bet, for he 6095
 Was of his love so dangerous to me.
 We winnemen han, if that I shal not lie,
 In this matere a queinte fantasie.
 Waite, what thing we may nat lightly have
 Therafter wol we cry all day and crave. 6100

Forbede us thing and that desiren we;
 Prese on us fast and thanne wol we flee.
 With danger attren we all our chaffare;
 Gret prees at market maketh dere ware,
 And to gret chepe is holden at litel prife; 6105
 This knoweth every woman that is wise.

My fifthe husbonde, God his soule bleffe,
 Which that I toke for love and no richeffe,
 He somtime was a clerk of Oxenforde,
 And had left scole, and went at home at borde 6110
 With my goffib, dwelling in oure toun,
 God have hire soule! hire name was Alifoun.
 She knew my herte and all my privetee
 Bet than our parish preest, so mote I the:
 To hire bewrisd I my conseil all, 6115
 For had my husbond pissed on a wall,
 Or don a thing that shuld have cost his lif,
 To hire, and to another worthy wif,
 And to my nece, which that I loved wel,
 I wold have told his conseil every del: 6120
 And so I did ful often, God it wote,
 That made his face ful often red and hote
 For veray shame, and blamed himself for he
 Had told to me so gret a privetee.

And so befell that ones in a Lent 6125
 (So often times I to my goffib went,
For ever yet I loved to be gay,
And for to walke in March, April, and May,

From hous to hous, to heren sondry tales)
 That Jankin clerk, and my goffib Dame Ales, 6130
 And I myself, into the feldes went.
 Myn hufbond was at London all that Lent:
 had the better leifer for to pleie,
 And for to see, and eke for to be seie
 Of lusty folk. What wist I wher my grace 6135
 Was shapen for to be, or in what place?
 Therefore made I my visitations
 To vigilies and to processions,
 To prechings eke, and to thise pilgrimages,
 To playes of miracles, and mariages, 6140
 And wered upon my gay skarlet gites.
 Thise wormes, ne thise mothes, ne thise mites,
 Upon my paraille frett hem never a del;
 And wost thou why? for they were used wel.
 Now wol I tellen forth what happed me. 6145
 I say that in the feldes walked we
 Till trewely we had swiche daliance
 This clerk and I, that of my purveance
 spake to him, and said him how that he,
 If I were widewe, shulde wedden me. 6150
 For certainly, I say for no bobance,
 Yet was I never without purveance

✧ 6137. *visitations*] *Rom. de la R.* 12492;

Souvent vaise a la mere Eglise,

Et face visitations

Aux nopces, aux processions,

Aux jeux, aux fetes, aux caroles.—

✧ 6151. *bobance*] Boasting pride, Fr. "En orgueil et en bo-

Of mariage, ne of other thinges eke :
 I hold a monkes wit not worth a leke
 That hath but on hole for to sterten to, 6155
 And if that faille than is all ydo.

I bare him on hond he had enchanted me,
 (My dame taughte me that subtiltee)
 And eke I sayd I mette of him all night,
 He wold han slain me as I lay upright, 6160
 And all my bed was ful of veray blood;
 But yet I hope that ye shuln do me good,
 For blood betokeneth gold, as me was taught.
 And al was false, I dremed of him right naught,
 But as I folwed ay my dames lore 6165
 As wel of that as of other thinges more.

But now, Sire, let me see, what shall I fain ?
 A ha ! by God I have my Tale again.
 Whan that my fourthe husbonde was on bere
 I wept algate and made a sory chere, 6170
 As wives moten, for it is the usage,
 And with my coverchefe covered my visage ;
 But for that I was purveyed of a make
 I wept but smal, and that I undertake.
 To chirche was myn husbond, born a-morwe 6175
 With neigheboures that for him maden forewe,
 And Jankin oure clerk was on of tho ;
 As helpe me God, whan that I saw him go

bans," Froissart, v. iv. c. 70. In the edit. it is balance. The thought in the next lines is taken from Rom. de la R. 13914;

*Moult y fairs'prie recours,
 Et met en grand peril la drue,
 Qui n'a qu'un partuy a refuge.*

After the bere me thought he had a paire
 Of legges and of feet so clene and faire 6180
 That all my herte I yave unto his hold.
 He was, I trow, a twenty winter old,
 And I was fourty, if I shal say soth,
 But yet I had alway a coltes toth.
 Gat-tothed I was, and that became me wele; 6185
 I had the print of Seint Venus fele.
 As helpe me God I was a lusty on,
 And faire and riche, and yonge, and wel begon;
 And trewely, as min husbondes tolden me,
 I had the beste queint that mighte be, 6190
 For certes I am all Venerian
 In seling, and my herte is Martian :
 Venus me yave my lust and likerousnesse,
 And Mars yave me my sturdy hardinesse.
 Min ascendent was Taure, and Mars therinne :
 Alas, alas! that ever loye was sinne! 6196
 I folwed ay min inclination
 By vertue of my constellation;
 That made me that I coude nat withdraw
 My chambre of Venus from a good felaw; 6200
 Yet have I Martes merke upon my face,
 And also in another privee place :

†. 6191—4.] These four lines are wanting in mss. *A. A. &c.*
 1, 2, and several others; and so are the eight lines from ver.
 6201 to ver. 6208 incl.: they certainly might very well be
 spared.

For God so wisly be my salvation
 I loved never by no discretion,
 But ever folwed min appetit,
 All were he shorte, longe, blacke, or white:
 I toke no kepe, so that he liked me,
 How poure he was, ne eke of what degree.

What shulde I saye? but at the monthes ende
 This joly clerk Jankin, that was so hende,
 Hath wedded me with gret solempnitee,
 And to him yave I all the lond and fee
 That ever was me yeven therbefore,
 But afterward repented me ful sore.
 He n'olde suffre nothing of my list:
 By God he smote me ones with his fist,
 For that I rent out of his book a lefe,
 That of the stroke myn ere wex al dese.
 Stibborne I was as is a leoneffe,
 And of my tonge a veray jangleresse;
 And walke I wold, as I had don beforn,
 Fro hous to hous, although he had it swo
 For which he oftentimes wold preche,
 And me of olde Romaine gestes teche.

¶ 6216. *with his fist*] Ms. A. reads—*on the l*
 ed. Ca. 2, with the addition of (what was at
 gloss) *on the cheke*. In support of this reading
 ved that Sir Thomas More, among many C
 has this in his *Merry Jest of a Sergeant*, &c.

And with his fist
Upon the lyft
He gave him such a blow.—

How he Sulpitius Gallus left his wif, 6225
 And hire forfoke for terme of all his lif,
 Not but for open-heded he hire fay
 Loking out at his dore upon a day.

Another Romaine told he me by name,
 That for his wif was at a fommer game 6230
 Without his weting he forfoke hire eke.

And thari wold he upon his Bible seke
 That ilke proverbe of Ecclesiaste,
 Wher he commandeth, and forbedeth faste,
 Man shal not suffer his wif go roule aboute. 6235

Than wold he say right thus withouten doute,
 Who so that bildeth his hous all of falwes,
 And priketh his blind hors over the falwes,
 And suffereth his wif to go seken halwes,
 Is worthy to be honged on the galwes. 6240

But all for nought; I sette not an hawe
 Of his proverbes ne of his olde sawe;

* 6227. *open-beded*] This is literally from *Val. Max.* l. vi. c. 3; "Uxorem dimisit, quod eam capite aperto foris versatam cognoverat." He gives the reason of this severity; "Lex enim tibi meos tantum præfinit oculos, quibus formam tuam approbes. His decoris instrumenta compara: his esto speciosa," &c.

* 6230. *a fommer game*] This expression, I suppose, took its rise from the summer being the usual season for games. It is used in *P. P.* fol. 27;

I have lever here an harlotry or a *fomers game*—
 This story is also from *Val. Max.* l. vi. c. 3; "P. Sempronius Sophus—conjugem repudii notâ affectit, nihil aliud quam se ignorante ludos ausam spectare."

THE WIF OF BATHES PROLOGUE.

old not of him corrected be.
 em that my vices tellen me,
 do mo of us (God wote) than I. 6245
 ade him wood with me all utterly;
 : not forbere him in no cas.
 ' wol I say you soth, by Seint Thomas,
 at I rent out of his book a lefe,
 ich he smote me so that I was defe. 6250
 ad a book that gladly night and day
 disport he wolde it rede alway;
 ed it Valerie and Theophrast,
 ith that book he lough alway ful fast.
 e ther was a clerk somtime at Rome, 6255
 nal, that highte Seint Jerome,
 ade a book again Jovinian,
 book was ther, and eke Tertullian,
 us, Trotula, and Helowis,
 as abbess not fer fro Paris, 6260

[3. *Valerie and Theophrast*] Some account has been
 these two treatises in the *Discourse*, &c. n. 19. As to
 of the contents of this volume, Hieronymus *contra Jo-*
 s, and Tertullian *de Pallio*, are sufficiently known; and
 e Letters of Eloisa and Abelard, the Parables of Solo-
 d Ovid's Art of Love. I know of no *Trotula* but one,
 ok "Curandarum ægritudinum muliebrium ante, in,
 partum," is printed *int. Medicos antiquos*, Ven. 1547.
 meant by *Crisippus* I cannot guess.

[8. *Which book was ther*] I have here departed from
 which all read—In *which book ther was* eke.—Per-
 ever, it might be sufficient to put a full stop after Jo-

eke the Paraboles of Salomon,
 des Art, and bourdes many on;
 d alle thise were bonden in o volume.
 d every night and day was his custume
 /han he had leifer and vacation 6265
 om other wordly occupation)
 o reden in this book of wikked wives:
 le knew of hem mo legendes and mo lives
 /han ben of goode wives in the Bible.
 For trusteth wel it is an impossible 6270
 That any clerk wol speken good of wives,
 (But if it be of holy seintes lives)
 Ne of non other woman never the mo.
 Who peinted the leon, telleth me who?
 By God if wimmen hadden written stories, 6275
 As clerkes han, within hir oratories,
 They wold have writ of men more wikkednesse
 Than all the merke of Adam may redresse.
 The children of Mercury and of Venus
 Ben in hir werking ful contrarious. 6280
 Mercury loveth wisdom and science,
 And Venus loveth riot and dispenge;
 And for hir divers disposition
 Eche falleth in others exaltation:

†. 6284. *exaltation*] In the old astrology a planet was said to be in its *exaltation* when it was in that sign of the zodiack in which it was supposed to exert its strongest influence; the opposite sign was called its *dejection*, as in that it was supposed to be weakest. To take the instance in the text, the *exaltation of Venus was in Pluces*, [See also ver. 10587,] and her de-

As thus; God wote Mercury is defolat 6285
 In Pisces, wher Venus is exaltat,
 And Venus falleth wher Mercury is reised,
 Therefore no woman of no clerk is preised.
 The clerk whan he is old, and may nought do
 Of Venuswerkes not worth his old sho, 6290
 Than siteth he doun and writeth in his dotage
 That wimmen cannot kepe hir marriage.
 But now to purpos why I tolde thee
 That I was beten for a book parde.

Upon a night Jankin, that was our fire, 6295
 Red on his book as he sate by the fire,
 Of Eva first, that for hire wikkednesse
 Was all mankinde brought to wretchednesse,
 For which that Jesu Crist himself was slain,
 That bought us with his herte blood again. 6300

Lo here expresse of wimmen may ye find
 That woman was the losse of all mankind.

Tho redde he me how Sampson lost his heres,
 Sleping his lemman kitte hem with hire sheres,
 Thurgh whichẽ treson lost he both his eyen. 6305

Tho redde he me, if that I shal not lien,
 jectiõ of course in Virgo; but in Virgo was the *exaltation* of
 Mercury;

She is the welthe and the ryfynge,
 The lust, the joy, and the lykynge,
 Unto Mercury.—

Gower, Conf. Amant. l. vii. fol. 147. So in ver. 10098, Cancer
 is called *Joves exaltation*.

¶ 6303, *Tho redde be*] Most of the following instances are
 mentioned in the *Epistola Valerii ad Rufinum de non ducenda*
uore. See also *Rom. de la R.* 9140, 9615, et suiv.

Of Hercules, and of his Deianire,
That caused him to set himself a-fire.

Nothing forgat he the care and the wo
That Socrates had with his wives two; 6310
How Xantippa cast pisse upon his hed.
This sely man sat still as he were ded;
He wiped his hed; no more dorst he sain
But, Er the thonder stint ther cometh rain.

Of Pasiphae, that was the Quene of Crete, 6315
For shrewednesse him thought the tale swete.
Fie! speke no more (it is a grisely thing)
Of hire horrible lust and hire liking.

Of Clitemnestra, for hire lecherie
That falsely made hire husbond for to die, 6320
He redde it with ful good devotion.

He told me eke for what occasion
Amphiorax at Thebes lost his lif :
My husbond had a legend of his wif
Eriphile, that for an ouche of gold 6325
Hath prively unto the Grekes told
Wher that hire husbond hidde him in a place,
For which he had at Thebes sory grace.

Of Lima told he me, and of Lucie;
They bothe made hir husbondes for to die, 6330

¶ 6329. *Of Lima—and of Lucie*] In the *Epistola Valerii*, &c. ms. Reg. 12. D. iii, the story is told thus; “*Luna virum suum interfecit quem nimis odivit: Lucilia suum quem nimis amavit. Illa sponte miscuit aconita: hæc decepta furorem pro-*”
“*pinavit pro amoris poculo.*” *Lima* and *Luna* in many mss. are only distinguishable by a small stroke over the i, which may be easily overlooked where it is, and supposed where it is not.

That on for love, that other was for hate.
 Lima hire husbond on an even late
 Enpoysoned hath, for that she was his so:
 Lucia likerous loved hire husbond so,
 That for he shuld alway upon hire thinke 6335
 She yave him swiche a maner love-drinke
 That he was ded er it were by the morwe:
 And thus algates husbondes hadden sorwe.
 Than told he me how on Latumeus
 Complained to his felaw Arius 6340
 That in his gardin growed swiche a tree,
 On which he said how that his wives thre
 Honged himself for hertes despitous.
 O leve brother! quod this Arius,
 Yeve me a plant of thilke blessed tree, 6345
 And in my gardin planted shal it be.

Of later date of wives hath he redde,
 That som han slain hir husbondes in hir bedde,
 And let hir lechour dight hem all the night,
 While that the corps lay in the flore upright; 6350
 And som han driven nalles in hir brain,
 While that they slepe, and thus they han hem slain;
 Som han hem yeven poyson in hir drink:
 He spake more harm than herte may bethinke.

And therewithall he knew of mo proverbes 6355
 Than in this world ther growen gras or herbes.

* 6339. *Latumeus*] In mss. *A. B.* 1, 2, it is *Latynius*; in the
Epistola Valerii just cited, *Pavorinus* *sens* ait *Arrio*.—

* 6355. *mo proverbes*] For the following aphorisms see *Prov.*

Bet is (quod he) thin habitation
 Be with a leon or a foule dragon . . .
 Than with a woman using for to chide.

Bet is (quod he) high in the roof abide 6360
 Than with an angry woman donn in the hous,
 They ben so wikked and contrarious:
 They haten that hir husbondes loven ay.

He sayd a woman cast hire shame away
 When she cast of hire smock; and forther mo, 6365
 A faire woman, but she be chaft also,
 Is like a gold ring in a sowes nose.

Who coude wene or who coude suppose
 The wo that in min herte was and the pine?
 And whan I saw he n'olde never fine 6370
 To reden on this cursed book all night,

Al soderly three leves have I plight
 Out of his book, right as he redde, and eke
 I with my fist so toke him on the cheke
 That in oure fire he fell backward adoun; 6375

And he up sterde as doth a wood leoun,
 And with his fist he smote me on the hed,
 That in the flore I lay as I were ded.

And whan he saw how stille that I lay
 He was agast, and wold have fled away, 6380
 Til at the last out of my Iwough I brayde.
 O! hast thou slain me, false theef? I sayde,

xxi. 9. 19, and xl. 22. The observation in ver. 6364 is in *Herodotus*, b. i. p. 5, ed. *Wesseling*.

And for my lond thus hast thou mordred me?
 Er I be ded yet wol I kissen thee.
 And nere he came, and kneled faire adoun, 6385
 And sayde, Dere suster Alifoun!
 As helpe me God I shal thee never smite:
 That I have don it is thyself to wite;
 Foryeve it me, and that I thee beseke.
 And yet eftsones I hitte him on the cheke, 6390
 And sayde, Theef, thus much am I awrcke.
 Now wol I die, I may no longer speke.
 But at the last, with mochel care and wo,
 We fell accorded by ourselven two.
 He yaf me all the bridel in min hond 6395
 To han the governaunce of hous and lond,
 And of his tonge and of his hond also,
 And made him brenne his book anon right tho.
 And whan that I had gotten unto me
 By maistrice all the soveraintee, 6400
 And that he sayd, Min owen trewe wif,
 Do as thee list the terme of all thy lif;
 Kepe thin honour, and kepe eke min estat;
 After that day we never had debat.
 God helpe me so, I was to him as kinde 6405
 As any wif fro Denmark unto Inde,
 And al so trewe, and so was he to me:
 I pray to God that sit in majestee
 So blisse his soule, for his mercy dere.
 Now wol I say my Tale if ye wol here. 6410

e Frere lough whan he had herd all this :
 Dame, quod he, so have I joye and blis,
 is a long preamble of a Tale.
 d whan the Sompnour herd the Frere gale,
 quod this Sompnour) Goddes armes two, 6415
 re wol entermete him evermo :
 oode men, a flie and eke a Frere
 fall in every dish and eke matere.
 : spekest thou of preambulation ?
 : ? amble or trot, or pees, or go fit down : 6420
 lettest our disport in this matere.
 , wolt thou so, Sire Sompnour ? quod the Frere ;
 by my faith I shal, er that I go,
 of a Sompnour swiche a Tale or two,
 all the folk shal laughen in this place. 6425
 ow elles, Frere, I wol beshrewe thy face,
 d this Sompnour) and I beshrewe me
 f I telle Tales two or three
 eres, or I come to Sidenborne,
 I shal make thin herte for to morne, 6430
 vel I wot thy patience is gone.
 ir Hoste cried, Pees, and that anon ;

5414. *the Sompnour herd the Frere gale*] The same word
 below, ver. 6918, "and let the Sompnour gale." In both
 it seems to be used metaphorically. *Galan*, Sax. *signi-*
neret. It is used literally in 'The Court of Love', ver. 1357,
 the nightingale is said—to crie and *gale* ; hence its name
gale or *nightengale*. In the Island. *at gala* is *ululare*, *Galli-*
exclamare ; and *Hana gal*, *Gallicinium*. *Gudm. And. Lex.*

And sayde, Let the woman tell hire Tale;
 Ye fare as folk that dronken ben of ale;
 Do, Dame, tell forth your Tale, and that is best. 6435
 Al redy, Sirre, quod she, right as you lest,
 If I have licence of this worthy Frere.
 Yes, Dame, quod he, tell forth, and I wol here.

THE WIF OF BATHES TALE.

IN olde dayes of the King Artour.
 Of which that Bretons speken gret honour, 6440
 All was this lond fulfilled of Faerie;
 The Elf-queene with hire joly compaignie

The Wif of Bathes Tale] A bachelor of King Arthur's court is enjoined by the Queen, upon pain of death, to tell what thing it is that women do most desire. At length he is taught it by an old woman, whom he is enforced to marry. *Urry*.

¶ 6439. *King Artour*] I hope that Chaucer, by placing the Elf-queene in the dayes of King Artour, did not mean to intimate that the two monarchies were equally fabulous and visionary. Master Wace has judged more candidly of the exploits of our British hero;

Ne tut n'ist'age: ne tut veir;
 Ne tut fable, ne tut aveir.
 Tant ont li contes e conte,
 E li fablor, tant fable,
 Pur les coutes enbelecer,
 Ke tut unt fait fable sembler. *Le Brut*, ms. Cotton, Titul. A. 7.

¶ 6441. *Faerie*] *Ferie*, Fr. from *fée*, the French name for those fantastical beings which in the Gothick languages are called Alfs or Elves. The corresponding names to *fée* in the other romance dialects are *fata*, Ital. and *bada*, Span.; so that it is probable that all three are derived from the Lat. *fatum*, which in the barbarous ages was corrupted into *fatus* and *fata*. See *Menage*, in v. *Fée*. *Du Cange*, in v. *Fadus*.—Our system of *Faerie* would have been much more complete if all our ancient writ-

landed ful oft in many a grene mede.
his was the old opinion as I rede;

we had taken the same laudable pains to inform us upon that head that Gervase of Tilbery has done, *Ot. Imp. Dec.* iii. c. 61, 2. he mentions two species of dæmons in England which I do not recollect to have met with in any other author. The first is those "Quos Galli Néptunos, Angli Portunos, nominant." Of the others he says—"Est in Angliâ quoddam dæmonum genus, quod suo idiomate Grant nominant adinstar pulli equini anniculi, tibis erectum, oculis scintillantibus," &c. —This last seems to have been a dæmon *of the genus*, but the *Portunus* appears to have resembled the *Goblin*, as described by *Orderic. Vital.* i. v. p. 556: speaking of the miracles of St. Taurinus at Evreux in Normandy he says—"Dæmon enim, quem de Dianæ phano expulit, adhuc in eadem urbe degit, et in variis frequenter formis apparens neminem lædit. Hunc vulgus *Gobelinum* appellat, et per merita Sancti Taurini ab humanâ læsione coercitum usque hodie affirmat."—In the same manner Gervase says of the *Portuni*, "Id illis insitum est, ut obsequi possint et obesse non possint." He adds indeed an exception; "Verum unicum quasi modulum nocendi habent. Cum enim inter ambiguas noctis tenebras Angli solitarii quandoque equitant, *Portunus* nonnunquam invisus equitanti se copulat, et cum diutius comitatur euntem, tandem loris arreptis equum in lutum ad manum ducit, in quo dum infixos volutatur, *Portunus* exiers *cachinnum facit*, et sic huiusmodi ludibrio humanam simplicitatem deridet."—This is exactly such a prank as our *Hob* (or *top*) *goblin* was used to play. See the *Middlem. Night's Dream*, 2 li. sc. 1, and Drayton's *Nymphidia* *.—It should be observed that the *Portuni* (according to Gervase) were of the true Faery size; "staturâ pusilli, dimidium pollicis non habentes." But

* I shall here correct a mistake of my own in the *Disc.* &c. n. 23. I have supposed that Shakespeare might have followed Drayton in his very system. I have since observed that Don Quixote (which was not published till 1605) is cited in The *Nymphidia*, whereas we have an edition of The *Middlem. Night's Dream* in 1600; so that Drayton undoubtedly followed Shakespeare.

I speke of many hundred yeres ago, 6445
 But now can no man see non elves mo;
 For now the grete charitee and prayres
 Of limitoures and other holy freres,
 That serchen every land and every streme,
 As thikke as motes in the sonne beme, 6450
 Blissing halles, chambres, kichenes, and boures,
 Citees and burghes, castles highe and toures,
 Thropes and barnes, shepenes and dairies,
 This maketh that ther ben no Faeries :
 For ther as wont to walken was an elf, 6455
 Ther walketh now the limitour himself
 In undermeles and in morweninges,
 And sayth his matines and his holy thinges
 As he goth in his limitatioun.
 Women may now go safely up and down, 6460

then indeed they were "senili vultu, facie corrugata." In Dec. i. c. 18, he describes another species of harmless dæmons called *Foileti*; *Fsprits Follets*, Fr. *Folletti*, Ital.----The *Incubus*, mentioned below, ver. 6462, was a Faery of not quite so harmless a nature. He succeeded to the ancient *Fauni*, and like them was supposed to inflict that oppression which goes under the name of the *ephaltes* or *nightmare*. Pliny calls the *ephaltes Faunorum in quiete ludibria*, N. H. l. 25. x. The *Incubus* however, as Chaucer insinuates, exerted his powers for love as well as for hate, *Gerwas. Tilber. Dec. i. c. 17*; "Vidimus quosdam Dæmones tanto Zelo mulieres amare quod ad inaudita prorumpunt ludibria, et cum ad concubitum earum accedunt mirā mole eas opprimunt, nec ab illis videntur."
 †. 6457. *undermeles*] 'The undermele, i. e. *undern-mele*, was the dinner of our ancestors. See the n. on ver. 8136.

In every bush, and under every tree,
 Ther is non other Incubus but he,
 And he ne will don hem no dishonour.

And so befell it that this King Artour
 Had in his hous a lusty bacheler, 6465
 That on a day came riding fro river :
 And happed that; alone as she was borne,
 He saw a maiden walking him beforne,
 Of which maid he anon, maugre hire hed,
 By veray force beraft hire maidenhed : 6470
 For which oppression was swiche clamour,
 And swiche pursuite unto the King Artour,
 That damned was this knight for to be ded
 By cours of lawe, and shuld have lost his hed,
 (Paraventure swiche was the statute tho) 6475
 But that the quene and other ladies mo
 So longe praieden the king of grace,
 Til he his lif him granted in the place,

*. 6466. *came riding fro river*] Or *fro the river*, as it is in some mss.: it means from hawking at waterfowl, *Froiss.* v. i. c. 140; "Le Comte de Flandres estoit tousjours *en riviere*—un jour advint qu'il alla voller *en la riviere*—et getta son Fauconnier un faucon *apres le beron*, et le Comte aussi un."—So in c. 210, he says that Edw. III. had with him in his army—"trente fauconniers à cheval, chargez d'oiseaux, et bien soixante couples de forts chiens et autant de levriers: dont il alloit, chacun jour ou en chace ou *en riviere*, ainsi que il luy plaisoit." Sire Thopas is described as following this knightly sport, ver. 13665;

He coude hunte at the wilde dere,
 And ride on hauking *for the rivere*,
 With grey gothawk on honde.

And yaf him to the quene, all at hire will
 To chese whether she wold him save or spill: 6480

The quene thanketh the king with al hire might;
 And after this thus spake she to the knight,
 Whan that she saw hire time upon a day.

Thou standest yet (quod she) in swiche array,
 That of thy lif yet hast thou not seuretee; 6485
 I grant thee lif if thou canst tellen me.

What thing is it that women most desiren:
 Beware, and keppe thy nekke bone from yren.

And if thou canst not tell it me anon,
 Yet wol I yewe thee leve for to gon: 6490

A twelvemonth and a day to seke and lere
 An answer suffisant in this matere;
 And seuretee wol I have, or that thou pace,
 Thy body forto yelden in this place.

Wo was the knight, and sorwefully he liketh: 6495
 But what? he may not don all as him liketh.

And at the last he chese him for to wende,
 And come agen right at the yeres ende
 With swiche answer as God wold him purvey,
 And taketh his leve, and wendeth forth his way. 6500

He seketh every hous and every place,
 Wher as he hopeth for to finden grace,
 To lernen what thing women loven mooste;
 But he ne coude ariven in no coste
 Wher as he mighte find in this matere 6505

Two creatures according in fere,

Som saiden women loven best richeſſe,
 Som saiden honour, som saiden jolineſſe,
 Som riche array, som saiden luſt a-bedde,
 And oft time to be widewe and to be wedde. 6510

Some saiden that we ben in herte moſt eſed
 Whan that we ben yflatered and ypreiſed.
 He goth ful nigh the ſoth, I wol not lie;
 A man ſhal winne us beſt with flaterie;
 And with attendance and with beſineſſe 6515
 Ben we ylimed bothe more and leſſe.

And som men saiden that we loven beſt
 For to be free, and do right as us leſt,
 And that no man repreve us of our vice,
 But ſay that we ben wiſe and nothing nice: 6520
 For trewely ther n'is non of us all,
 If any wight wol claw us on the gall,
 That we n'ill kike for that he ſaith us ſoth;
 Affay, and he ſhal find it that ſo doth:
 For be we never ſo vicious withinne 6525
 We wol be holden wiſe and clenie of ſinne.

And som saiden that gret delit han we
 For to be holden ſtable and eke ſecre,
 And in o purpos ſtedfaſtly to dwell,
 And not bewreyen thing that men us tell; 6530
 But that tale is not worth a rake-ſtele.
 Parde we women connen nothing hele,
 Witneſſe on Mida; wol ye here the Tale?

Ovide, amonges other thinges ſmale,

Said Mida had under his longe heres 6535
 Growing upon his hed two asses eres,
 The whiche vice he hid, as he beste might,
 Ful subtilly from every mannes sight,
 That save his wif ther wist of it no mo;
 He loved hire most, and trusted hire also; 6540
 He praied hire that to no creature
 She n'olde tellen of his disfigure.

She swore him Nay, for all the world to winne
 She nolde do that vilanie ne sinne,
 To make hire husbond han so foule a name: 6545
 She n'olde not tell it for hire owen shame.
 But natheles hire thoughte that she dide
 That she so longe shuld a conseil hide;
 Hire thought it swal so sore aboute hire herte,
 That nedely som word hire must asterte; 6550
 And sith she dorst nat telle it to no man,
 Doun to a mareis faste by she ran;
 Til she came ther hire herte was a-fire:
 And as a bitore bumbleth in the mire,
 She laid hire mouth unto the water doun. 6555
 Bewrey me not, thou water, with thy soun,
 Quod she; to theȝ I tell it, and no mo,
 Min husbond hath long asses eres two.
 Now is min herte all hole, now is it out,
 I might no lenger kepe it out of dout. 6560
 Here may ye see, though we a time abide,
Yet out it moſte; we can no conseil hide.

nenant of the Tale, if ye wol here,
 Ovide, and ther ye may it lere.
 knight, of which my Tale is specially, 6565
 hat he saw he might not come therby,
 to sayn, what women loven most)
 his brest ful forweful was his goost.
 ne he goth, he mighte not sojourne;
 / was come that homward must he turne.
 his way it happed him to ride, 6571
 s care, under a forest side,
 he saw upon a dance go
 s foure-and-twenty, and yet mo.
 l this ilke dance he drow ful yerne, 6575
 that he som wisdom shulde lerne;
 tainly er he came fully there
 ed was this dance he n'iste not wher;
 ture saw he that bare lif,
 the grene he saw sitting a wif, 6580
 r wight ther may no man devise.
 this knight this olde wif gan arise,
 d, Sire Knight, here forth ne lith no way.
 : what that ye seken by your fay,
 ture it may the better be: 6585
 lde folk con mochel thing, quod she.
 eve mother, quod this knight, certain
 but ded but if that I can sain
 hing it is that women most desire:
 ye me wisse I wold quite wel your hire. 6590

Plight me thy trouthe here in myn bond, quod she,
 The nexte thing that I requere of thee
 Thou shalt it do, if it be in thy might,
 And I wol tell it you or it be night.

Have hert my trouthe, quod the knight, I graunte

Thanne, quod she, I dare me wel avaunte . . . 659d

Thy lif is fust, for I wol stond therby,

Upon my lif the queene wol say as I . . .

Let see which is the proudest of hem alle,

That wereth on a kerchief or a calle, . . . 66cd

That dare sayn nay of that I shal ype teche.

Let us go forth withouten longer speche.

Tho rowned she a piffel in his ere,

And bad him to be glad, and have no fere.

Whan they ben comen to the court, this knight . . .

Said he had hold his day as he had hight, . . . 666d

And redy was his answer, as he saide.

Ful many a noble wif, and many a maide,

And many a widewe, for that they ben wise,

(The queene hirself sitting as a justice) . . . 668d

Assembled ben his answer for to here,

And afterward this knight was boke appere.

To every wight commanded was silence,

And that the knight shuld tell in audience.

What thing that worldly women loven best. . . 6615

This knight he stood not still as doth a best,

But to this question anon answerd

With manly vois, that all the court it herd.

My liege Lady, generally, quod he,
 Women desiren to han soverainetee, 6620
 As well over hir husbond as hir love,
 And for to ben in maistrie him above.
 This is your most desire, though ye me kille;
 Doth as you list, I am here at your wille.

In all the court ne was ther wif ne maide, 6625
 Ne widewe, that contraried that he saide,
 But said he was worthy to han his lif.

And with that word up flet this olde wif
 Which that the knight saw sitting on the grene.
 Mercy, quod she, my soveraine lady Quene, 6630
 Er that your court depart, as doth me right.
 I taughte this answer unto this knight,
 For which he plighte me his trouthe there
 The firste thing I wold of him requere
 He wold it do, if it lay in his might. 6635
 Before this court than pray I thee, Sire Knight,
 Quod she, that thou me take unto thy wif,
 For wel thou wost that I have kept thy lif:
 If I say false say nay upon thy fay.

This knight answered, Alas and wala wa! 6640
 I wot right wel that swiche was my behest.
 For Goddes love as chese a new request:
 Take all my good, and let my body go.

Nay than, quod she, I shrewe us bothe two:
 For though that I be olde, soule, and pore, 6645
 I n'olde for all *the metal ne the ore*

That under erthe is grave, or lith above,
But if thy wif I were and eke thy love.

My love! quod he; nay, my dampnation.
Alas! that any of my nation 64
Shuld ever so foule disparaged be.

But all for nought; the end is this, that he
Constrained was he nedes must hire wed,
And taketh this olde wif, and goth to bed.

Now wolden som men sayn paraventure, 66
That for my negligence I do no cure
To tellen you the joye and all the array
That at the feste was that ilke day.

To which thing shortly answeren I shal:
I say ther was no joye ne feste at al, 68
Ther n'as but heviness and mochel forwe;
For prively he wedded hire on the morwe,
And all day after hid him as an oule,
So wo was him his wif loked so foule.

Gret was the wo the knight had in his thought 66
Whan he was with his wif a-bed ybrought;
He walweth, and he turneth to and fro.

This olde wif lay smiling evermo,
And said, O dere husbond, *benedicite!*
Fareth every knight thus with his wif as ye? 66
Is this the lawe of King Artoures hous?
Is every knight of his thus dangerous?
I am your owen love, and eke your wif,
I am she which that saved hath your lif,

And certes yet did I you never unright; 6675
Why fare ye thus with me this firste night?
Ye faren like a man had lost his wit.
What is my gilt? for Goddes love tell it,
And it shal ben amended if I may.

Amended! quod this knight, alas! nay, nay, 6680
It wol not ben amended never mo;
Thou art so lothly, and so olde also,
And therto comen of so low a kind,
That litel wonder is though I walwe and wind;
So wolde God min herte wolde brest. 6685

Is this, quod she, the cause of your unrest?
Ye certainly, quod he, no wonder is.

Now Sire, quod she, I coude amend all this,
If that me list, er it were dayes three,
So wel ye mighten bere you unto me. 6690

But for ye speken of swiche gentilleffe;
As is descended out of old richesse,
That therfore shullen ye be gentilmen;
Swiche arrogance n'is not worth an hen.

Loke who that is most vertuous alway, 6695
Prive and apert, and most entendeth ay
To do the gentil dedes that he can,
And take him for the gretest gentilman.
Crist wol we claime of him our gentilleffe,
Not of our elders for hir old richesse; 6700
For though they yeve us all hir heritage,
For which we claime to ben of high parage,

Yet may they not bequethen for no thing
 To non of us hir vertuous living,
 That made hem gentilmen called to be, 67
 And bade us folwen hem in swiche degree.

Wel can the wise poet of Florence,
 That highte Dant, speken of this sentence :
 Lo in swiche maner rime is Dantes tale.

Ful selde up riseth by his branches smale 67
 Prowesse of man, for God of his goodnesse
 Wol that we claime of him our gentillese ;
 For of our elders may we nothing claime
 But temporel thing ; that man may hurt and main

Eke every wight wot this as wel as I, 67
 If gentillese were planted naturelly
 Unto a certain linage down the time,
 Prive and apert, than wold they never fine
 To don of gentillese the faire office ;
 They mighten do no vilanie or vice. 67

Take fire, and bere it into the derkest hous
 Betwix this and the Mount of Caucasus,
 And let man shette the dores, and go thenne,
 Yet wol the fire as faire lye and brenne
 As twenty thousand men might it behold ; 67
 His office naturel ay wol it hold,
 Up peril of my lif, til that it die.

Here may ye see wel how that genterie

*. 6710. *Ful selde up riseth*] Dante, *Purg.* vii. 121;

Rade volte risurge per li rami

L'humana probitate: et questo vuole

Quel che la dà, perche dà se si chiama

Is not annexed to possession,
 Sith folk ne don hir operation 6730
 Alway, as doth the fire, lo, in his kind :
 For God it wot men moun ful often find
 A lordes sone do shame and vilanie.
 And he that wol han pris of his genterie,
 For he was boren of a gentil hous, 6735
 And had his elders noble and vertuons,
 And n'ill himselven do no gentil dedes,
 Ne folwe his gentil auncestrie that ded is,
 He n'is not gentil, be he duk or erl,
 For vilains sinful dedes make a cherl : 6740
 For gentilleffe n'is but the renomee
 Of thin auncestres for hir high bountee,
 Which is a strange thing to thy persone :
 Thy gentilleffe cometh fro God alone ;
 Than cometh our veray gentilleffe of grace ; 6745
 It was no thing bequethed us with our place.
 Thinketh how noble, as faith Valerius,
 Was thilke Tullius Hostilius,
 That out of poverte rose to high noblesse.
 Redeth Senek, and redeth eke Boece, 6750
 Ther shull ye seen expresse that it no dred is
 That he is gentil that doth gentil dedis :

†. 6741. *For gentilleffe*] A great deal of this reasoning is copied from *Boetbius de Consol.* l. iii. pr. 6. See also R. R. 2150, et seq. ;

*For villanie maketh villaine,
 And by his dedes a chorle is seine, &c.*

And therefore, leve husband, I thus conclude,
 Al be it that min auncestres weren rude,
 Yet may the highe God, and so hope I, 6755
 Granten me grace to liven vertuoufly;
 Than am I gentil whan that I beginne
 To liven vertuoufly and weiven sinne.

And ther as ye of poverte me repreve,
 The highe God, on whom that we beleve, 6760
 In wilful poverte chese to lede his lif;
 And certes every man, maiden, or wif,
 May understond that Jesus heven king
 Ne wold not chese a vicious living.

Glad poverte is an honest thing certain, 6765
 This wol Senek and other clerkes sain.
 Who so that halt him paid of his poverte
 I hold him rich, al had he not a sherte.
 He that coveiteth is a poure wight,
 For he wold han that is not in his might; 6770
 But he that nought hath, ne coveiteth to have,
 Is riche, although ye hold him but a knave.
 Veray poverte is sinne proprely.

Juvenal saith of poverte merily,
 The poure man whan he goth by the way, 6775
 Beforn the thieves he may sing and play.
 Poverte is hateful good; and, as I gesse,
 A ful gret bringer out of besinesse;

¶ 6777. *Poverte is hateful good*] In this commendation of poverty our Author seems plainly to have had in view the following passage of a fabulous conference between the Emperor Adrian and Secundus the philosopher, reported by Vin-

A gret amender eke of sapience
 To him that taketh it in patience: 6780
 Poverté is this, although it seme elenge,
 Possession that no wight wol challenge.
 Poverté ful often, whan a man is low,
 Maketh his God and eke himself to know.
 Poverté a spectakel is, as thinketh me, 6785
 Thurgh which he may his veray frendes see.
 And therfore, Sire, sin that I you not greve,
 Of my poverté no more me repreve.

Now, Sire, of elde that ye repreven me :
 And certes, Sire, though non auctoritee 6790
 Were in no book, ye gentiles of honour
 Sain that men shuld an olde wight honour,
 And clepe him Fader, for your gentilleffe;
 And auctours shal I finden, as I gesse.

Now ther ye sain that I am foule and old, 6795
 Than drede ye not to ben a cokewold;

cent of Beauvais, *Spec. Histor.* l. x. c. 71; "Quid est Paupertas? Odibile bonum; sanitatis mater; remotio curarum; sapientie repertrix; negotium sine damno; possessio absque calumnia; sine sollicitudine felicitas." What Vincent has there published appears to have been extracted from a larger collection of Gnomæ under the name of *Secundus*, which are still extant in Greek and Latin. See *Fabric. Bib. Gr.* l. vi. c. x, and ms. *Harl.* 399. The author of *Pierce Ploughman* has quoted and paraphrased the same passage, fol. 75.

✧. 6781. *elenge*] Strange; probably from the old Fr. *espoingné*. So in *The Cuckow and Nighbtingale*, ver. 115;

Thy songes ben so *elenge* in good say.

And in *P. P.* fol. 3, b.;

Where the cat is a kiten the court is full *elenge*.
 See fol. 46, b. See also *Gloss.* in v. *Elenge*.

For filthe, and elde also, so mote I the,
 Ben grete wardeins upon chastitee.
 But natheles, sin I know your delit,
 I shal fulfill your worldly appetit. 6800

Chese now (quod she) on of thise thinges twey,
 To han me foule and old til that I dey,
 And be to you a trewe humble wif,
 And never you displese in all my lif;
 Or elles wol ye han me yonge and faire, 6805
 And take your aventure of the repaire
 That shal be to your hous because of me,
 Or in som other place it may wel be?
 Now chese yourselven whether that you liketh.

This knight aviseth him, and fore siketh, 6810
 But at the last he said in this manere:

My lady and my love, and wif so dere,
 I put me in your wise governance,
 Cheseth yourself which may be most plesance
 And most honour to you and me also, 6815
 I do no force the whether of the two,
 For as you liketh it sufficeth me.

Than have I got the maisterie, quod she,
 Sin I may chese and governe as me lest.
 Ye certes, wif, quod he, I hold it best. 6820

Kisse me, quod she, we be no lenger wrothe,
 For by my trouth I wol be to you bothe,

¶ 6797. *For filthe, and elde also, so*] Though none of the mss. that I have seen authorize the insertion of the second *so* it seems absolutely necessary.

This is to sayn, ye bothe faire and good.
 I pray to God that I mote sterven-wood
 But I to you be al so good and trowe 6825
 As ever was wif sin that the world was newe,
 And but I be to-morwe as faire to seen
 As any lady, emperice, or quene,
 That is betwix the est and eke the west,
 Doth with my lif and deth right as you lest. 6830
 Cast up the curtein, loke how that it is:
 And whan the knight saw veraily all this,
 That she so faire was, and so yonge therto,
 For joye he hent hire in his armes two:
 His herte bathed in a bath of blisse, 6835
 A thousand time a-row he gan hire kisse:
 And she obeyed him in every thing
 That mighte don him plesance or liking.
 And thus they live unto hir lives ende
 In parfit joye; and Jesu Crist us sende 6840
 Husbondes meke and yonge, and fresch a-bed,
 And grace to overlive hem that we wed.
 And eke I pray Jesus to short hir lives
 That wol not be governed by hir wives;
 And old and angry nigards of dispence
 God send hem sone a veray pestilence. 6846

THE FRERES PROLOGUE.

THIS worthy limitour, this noble Frere,
 He made alway a maner louring chere
 Upon the Sompnour, but for honestee
 No vilains word as yet to him spake he; 6850
 But at the last he said unto the Wif,
 Dame, (quod he) God yeve you right good lif,
 Ye have here touched, all so mote I the,
 In scole matere a ful gret difficultie;
 Ye han said mochel thing right wel I say: 6855
 But, Dame, here as we riden by the way
 Us nedeth not to speken but of game,
 And let auctoritees, in Goddes name,
 To preching and to scole eke of clergie.
 But if it like unto this compaignie 6860
 I wol you of a Sompnour tell a game;
 Parde ye may wel knowen by the name
 That of a Sompnour may no good be said;
 I pray that non of you be evil apaid:
 A Sompnour is a renner up and doun 6865
 With mandements for fornicatioun,
 And is ybete at every tounes ende.
 Tho spake our Hoste, A, Sire, ye shuld ben hende

†. 6858. *Auctoritees*] *Auðoritas* was the usual word for what we call a text of Scripture, ms. *Harl.* 106, 10; "Expositio *auðoritatis*, Majus gaudium super uno peccatore. *Ibid.* 21; "Exposito *auðoritatis*, Stetit populus de longe," &c.

And curteis, as a man of your estat,
 In compaignie we wiln have no debat : 6870
 Telleth your Tale, and let the Sompnour be.
 Nay, quod the Sompnour, let him say by me
 What so him list ; whan it cometh to my lot
 By God I shal him quiten every grot ;
 I shal him tellen which a gret honour 6875
 It is to be a flatering limitour,
 And eke of many another maner crime,
 Which nedeth not reherfen at this time,
 And his office I shal him tell ywis.
 Our Hoste answered, Pees, no more of this. 6880
 And afterward he said unto the Frere
 Tel forth your Tale min owen maister dere.

THE FRERES TALE.

WHILOM ther was dwelling in my contree
 An archedeken, a man of high degree,
 That boldely did execution 6885
 In punishing of fornication,
 Of witchecraft, and eke of bauderie,
 Of defamation, and avonterie,
 Of chirche-reves, and of testaments,
 Of contracts, and of lack of sacraments, 6890
 Of usure, and of simonie also,
 But certes lechours did he gretest wo ;

The Freres Tale] A Sompnour and the devil meeting on the way, after conference become sworn brethren, and to hell they go together. A covert invective against the bribery and corruption of the spiritual courts in those days. *Urry.*

They shulden singen if that they were hent,
 And smale tithes weren soule yshent;
 If any persone wold upon hem plaine 6895
 Ther might astert hem no pecunial peine.
 For smale tithes and smale offering
 He made the peple pitously to sing,
 For er the bishop hent hem with his crook
 They weren in the archedekens book; 6900
 Than had he thurgh his jurisdiction
 Power to don on hem correction.

He had a Sompnour redy to his hond,
 A slier boy was non in Englelond;
 For subtilly he had his espiaille, 6905
 That taught him wel wher it might ough availle.
 He coude spare of lechours on or two
 To techen hem to foure-and-twenty mo:
 For though this Sompnour wood be as an hare,
 To tell his harlotrie I wol not spare, 6910
 For we ben out of hir correction,
 They han of us no jurisdiction,
 Ne never shul have, terme of all hir lives.

Peter, so ben the women of the flives,
 Quod this Sompnour, yput out of our cure? 6915
 Pees, with mischance and with misaventure,
 Our Hoste said, and let him tell his Tale.
 Now telleth forth, and let the Sompnour gale,
 Ne spaireth not, min owen maister dere.

This false theef, this Sompnour, quod the Frere,

Had alway bandes redy to his hond, 6991
 As any hauke to lure in Englelond,
 That told him all the secree that they knewe,
 For hir acquaintance was not come of newe;
 They weren his approvers prively: 6925
 He tooke himself a gret profit therby,
 His maister knew not alway what he wan.
 Withouten mandement a lewed man
 He coude sompne up peine of Cristes curse,
 And they were inly glad to fille his purse, 6930
 And maken him gret festes at the nale.
 And right as Judas hadde purses smale,
 And was a theef, right swiche a theef was he;
 His master hadde but half his duetee.
 He was (if I shal yeven him his laud) 6935
 A theef, and eke a Sompnour, and a baud.
 He had eke wenches at his retenue,
 That whether that Sire Robert or Sire Hue,
 Or Jakke or Rauf, or who so that it were
 That lay by hem, they told it in his ere. 6940
 Thus was the wenche and he of on assent;
 And he wold fecche a feined mandement,
 And sompne hem to the chapitre bothe two,
 And pill the man and let the wenche go:
 Than wold he say, Frcnd, I shal for thy sake 6945
 Do strike thee out of oure lettres blake;

†. 6931. *the nale*] The alehouse, P. P. fol. 32, b.;

And than fatten some and longe at *the nale*.

Skinner supposes it to be a corruption of *inn-ale*, which is not impossible. See *Gloss.* in v. *Nale*.

Thee thar no more as in this cas travaille;
 I am thy stend ther I may thee availle.
 Certain he knew of briboures many mo
 Than possible is to tell in yeres two;
 For in this world n'is dogge for the bewe
 That can an hurt dere from an hole yknowe
 Bet than this Sompnour knew a flie lechour,
 Or an avouter or a paramour;
 And for that was the fruit of all his rent,
 Therfore on it he fet all his entent.

And so befell that ones on a day
 This Sompnour, waiting ever on his pray,
 Rode forth to sompne a widewe, an olde ribibe
 Feining a cause, for he wold han a bribe;
 And happed that he saw befor him ride
 A gay yeman under a forest fide;
 A bow he bare, and arwes bright and kene,
 He had upon a courtepy of grene,
 An hat upon his hed with frenges blake.

Sire, quod the Sompnour, haile, and wel ata

†. 6959. *an olde ribibe*] He calls her below, ver. 71 *olde rebeke*. They were both names for the same musical instrument. See *Menage*, in v. *Rebec*. *Ribeba*, in *The Deca* ix. 5, is rendered by Macon, the old French translator and *guiterne*. Chaucer uses also the diminutive *ribibi* 3331, 4395. How this instrument came to be put for woman I cannot guess, unless perhaps from its shrillness old writer, quoted by *Du Cange*, in v. *Baudouin*, has the following lines in his description of a concert;

*Quidam rebeccam arcuabant
 Muliebrem vocem confingentes.*

Welcome, quod he, and every good felaw.
Whider ridest thou under this grene shaw?
(Saide this yeman) wolt thou ser to-day?

This Sompnour him answerd, and saide Nay. 6970
Here faste by (quod he) is min entent
To riden, for to reisen up a rent
That longeth to my lordes duetee.

A! art thou than a baillif? Ye, quod he.
(He dorste not for veray filth and sluame 6975
Say that he was a Sompnour for the name.)

De par dieux, quod this yeman, leve brother,
Thou art a baillif, and I am another.
I am unknownen as in this contree;
Of thin acquaintance I wol prayen thee, 6980
And eke of brotherhed, if that thee list.
I have gold and silver lying in my chift;
If that thee hap to come in to our shire
Al shal be thin, right as thou wolt desire.

Grand mercy, quod this Sompnour, by my faith.
Everich in others hond his trouthe laith 6986
For to be sworne brethren til they dey.
In daliaunce they riden forth and pley.

This Sompnour, which that was as ful of jangles
As ful of verime ben thise wariangles, 6990

†. 6990. *wariangles*] I have nothing to say either in refutation or support of Mr. Speght's explanation of this word—
"A kind of birds full of noise, and very ravenous, preying upon others, which when they have taken they use to hang upon a thorne or pricke, and teare them in peeces, and de-

And ever enqueriſg upon every thing,
 Brother, quod he, wher is now your dwelling,
 Another day if that I ſhuld you ſeche?

This yeman him anſwerd in ſofte ſpeche,
 Brother, quod he, fer in the north contree, 6995
 Wheras I hope ſomtime I ſhal thee ſee.
 Or we depart I ſhal thee ſo wel wiſſe,
 That of min hous ne ſhalt thou never miſſe.

Now brother, quod this Sompnour, I you pray.
 Teche me, while that we riden by the way, 7000
 (Sith that ye ben a baillif as am I)
 Som ſubtiltee, and tell me faithfully
 In min office how I may moſte winne;
 And ſpareth not for conſcience or for ſinne,
 But as my brother tell me how do ye. 7005

Now by my treuthe, brother min, ſaid he,
 As I ſhal tellen thee a faithful Tale.
 My wages ben ful ſtreit and eke ful ſmale;
 My lord is hard to me and dangerous,
 And min office is ful laborious, 7010
 And therfore by extortion I leve;
 Forſoth I take all that men wol me yeve:
 Algates by fleighte or by violence
 Fro yere to yere I win all my diſpence:

"your them; and the common opinion is that the thorne
 "whereupon they thus faſten them and eat them is afterward
 "poſſorſome. In Staffordſhire and Shropſhire the name is com-
 "mon"—except that Cotgrave, in his *Fr. Diet.* explains *ar-*
nour to ſignify the ravenous bird called a *ſtrike*, *nyxmurder*,
warlingie. See *Not.* in v. *Warlingie*.

I can no better tellen faithfully. 7015

Now certes (quod this Sompnour) so fare I;
I spare not to taken, God it wote,
But if it be to hevy or to hote.
What I may gete in conseil prively
No maner conscience of that have I. 7020

N'ere min extortion I might not liven,
Ne of swiche japes wol I not be shriven.
Stomak ne conscience know I non;
I shrew thise shrifte faders everich on:
Wel be we met by God and by Seint Jame. 7025

But, leve brother, tell me than thy name,
Quod this Sompnour. Right in this mene while
This yeman gan a litel for to smile.

Brother, quod he, wolt thou that I thee tell?
I am a fend, my dwelling is in hell, 7030
And here I ride about my pourchasing
To wote wher men wol give me any thing:
My pourchas is th' effect of all my rent,
Loke how thou ridest for the same entent:
To winnen good thou rekkest never how: 7035

Right so fare I, for riden wol I now
Unto the worldes ende for a praye.

A, quod this Sompnour, *benedicite!* what say ye?
I wend ye were a yeman trewely,
Ye have a mannes shape as wel as I: 7040

* 7018. *to bevy or to hote*] We have nearly the same expression in *Froissart*, v. l. c. 229; "*ne laissoient riens à prendre, s'il n'estoit trop chaud, trop froid, ou trop pesant.*"

Have ye than a figure determinat
In helle, thier ye ben in your estat?

Nay certainly, quod he, thes have we non,
But whan us liketh we can take us on,
Or elles make you weene that we ben shape 7043
Somtime like a man, or like an ape,
Or like an angel can I ride or go;
It is no wonder thing though it be so;
A lousy jogelour can deceiven thee,
And parde yet can I more craft than he. 7050

Why, quod the Sompnour, ride ye than or gon
In fondry shape, and not alway in on?

For we, quod he, wol us swiche forme make
As most is able our preye for to take.

What maketh you to han al this labour? 7053

Ful many a cause, leve Sire Sompnour,
Saide this fend. But alle thing hath time;
The day is short, and it is passed prime,
And yet ne wan I nothing in this day;
I wol entend to winning if I may, 7060
And not entend our thinges to declare;
For, brother mine, thy wit is al to bare
To understand, although I told hem thee.
But for thou axest why labouren we?
For somtime we be Goddes instruments, 7063
And menes to don his commandements,
Whan that him list, upon his creatures,
In divers actes and in divers figures:

Withouten him we have no might certain,
If that him list to stonden theragain. 7070

And som time at our priere han we leve
Only the body and not the soule to greve;
Witnesse on Job, whom that we diden wo,
And somtime han we might on bothe two,
This is to sain, on soule and body eke : 7075

And somtime be we suffered for to seke
Upon a man, and don his soule unreste
And not his body, and all is for the beste.
Whan he withstandeth our temptation
It is a cause of his salvation, 7080

Al be it that it was not our entente
He shuld be sauf, but that we wold him hente.
And somtime be we servants unto man,
As to the Archebischop Seint Dunstan,
And to the apostle servant eke was I. 7085

Yet tell me, quod this Sompnour, faithfully,
Make ye you newe bodies thus alway
Of elements? The fend answered Nay.
Somtime we seine, and somtime we arise
With ded bodies, in ful sondry wise, 7090
And speke as renably, and faire, and wel,
As to the Phitonesse did Samuel;

¶. 7092. *As to the Phitonesse did Samuel*] So ms. A.; the editt. read,

As the Phitonesse did to Samuel—
which is certainly wrong. See 1 Sam. xxviii. Our Author uses
Phitonesse for *Pyrbonesse*, *H. F.* iii. 171; and so does Gower,
Conf. Amant. fol. 140;

The Phitonesse in Samary.—

And yet wol som men say it was not he:
I do no force of your divinitee.

But o thing warne I thee, I wol not jape, 7095
Thou wolt algates wete how we be shape:
Thou shalt hereafterward, my brother dere,
Come wher thee nedeth not of me to lere,
For thou shalt by thin owen experience
Conne in a chaire rede of this sentence 7105
Bet than Virgile, while he was on live,
Or Dant also. Now let us riden blive,
For I wol holden compaignie with thee
Til it be so that thou forsake me.

Nay, quod this Sompnour, that shal never betide.
I am yeman knowen is ful wide; 7106
My trouthe wol I hold, as in this cas;
For though thou were the devil Sathanas
My trouthe wol I hold to thee, my brother,
As I have sworne, and eche of us to other, 7110
For to be trewe brethren in this cas,
And bothe we gon abouten our purchas.
'Take thou thy part, what that men wol thee yeve,
And I shal min, thus may we bothe leve;
And if that any of us have more than other 7115
Let him be trewe, and part it with his brother.

I graunte, quod the devil, by my fay.
And with that word they riden forth hir way,
And right at entring of the tounes ende
To which this Sompnour shope him for to wende

They saw a cart that charged was with hay, 7121
Which that a carter drove forth on his way.

Depe was the way, for which the carte stood;
The carter smote, and cried as he were wood,
Heit Scot, heit Brok; what, spare ye for the stones?
The fend (quod he) you secche body and bones, 7126
As ferforthly as ever ye were soled,
So mochel wo as I have with you tholed.

The devil have al, bothe hors, and cart, and hay.

The Sompnour sayde, Here shal we have a pray;
And nere the fend he drow, as nought newere, 7131
Ful prively, and rouned in his ere,

Herken my brother, herken, by thy faith;
Hercst thou not how that the carter saith?

Hent it anon, for he hath yeve it thee, 7135
Both hay and cart, and eke his caples three.

Nay, quod the devil, God wot never a del;
It is not his entente, trust thou me wel:

Axe him thyself, if thou not trowest me,
Or elles slint a while and thou shalt see. 7140

This carter thakketh his hors upon the croupe,
And they begonne to drawen and to floupe.

Heit now, quod he; ther, Jesu Crist you blesse,
And all his hondes werk bothe more and lessu!

That was wel twight, min owen Liard boy, 7145
I pray God save thy body and Scint Eloy.

¶ 7145. *Liard*] A common appellative for a horse, from its grey colour, as *Bayard* was from *bay*. [See before, ver. 4113, P. P. fol. 92;

He lyght downe of *Liarde* and ladde him in his hand.

Now is my cart out of the slough pade.

Lo, brother, quod the fend, what told I thee?
Here may ye seen, min owen dere brother;
The cheri spake o thing but he thought moother.
Let us go forth abouten our vinge; 715
Here wis I nothing upon this cariage.

Whan that they comen somewhat out of town
This Sompsoer to his brother gan to sonne;
Brother, quod he, here wenech an old rebekke 715
That had almost as lefe so lefe hire unke.
As for to yeve a peny of hire good,
I wol have twelf peny enough that she be wood;
Or I wol sende hire to our office,
And yet, God wot, of hire know I the vice; 720
But for thou canst not as in this contee
Winnen thy cost, take here ensample of me.

This Sompsoer clappeth at the widweegate;
Come out, he sayd, thou olde very trate;
I trow thou hast som frere or preest with thee. 725

Who clappeth? said this wif, *benedicite*!
God save you, sire, what is your swete will?

I have, quod he, of somons here a bill:
Up peine of cursing loke that thou be
To-morwe before the archodekenet kneo; 729

Bishop Douglas, in his Virgil, usually puts *hars* for *abus*, *hac*
nus, &c.

7. 7164. *thou olde very trate*] So mss. C. 1, A. 1, 2, and
ed. Ca. 2. The later edict. read *viristrate*, in one word. We
may suppose *trate* to be used for *tree*, a common term for a
old woman. Keyfler [*Antiq. Sept.* p. 503.] refers it to the same
original with the German *drud* or *drut*, &c.

re to the court of certain thinges.
 ord, quod she, Crist Jese, King of kinges,
 elpe me as I ne may;
 like, and that ful many a day:
 go so fer (quod she) ne ride 7175
 ed, so priketh it in my side.
 axe a libel, Sire Sompnoour,
 ere ther by my procuratour.
 : thing as men wold apposen me?
 od this Sompnoour, pay anon, let see, 7180
 is to me, and I wol thee acquits:
 rofit han therby but lite;
 er hath the profit and not I.
 and let me riden hastily;
 :welf pens, I may no lenger tarie. 7185
 pens! quod she; now Lady Seint Marie
 elpe me out of care and finne,
 : world though that I shuld it winne,
 not twelf pens within my hold.
 en wel that I am poure and old; 7190
 r almesse upon me poure wretche.
 an, quod he, the foule fend me fetche
 xcuse, though thou shuldest be spilt.
 uod she, God wot I have no gilt.
 :, quod he, or by the swete Scinte Anne
 berc away thy newe panne 7196
 which thou owest me of old
 t thou madest thyn husbond cokewold

I paid at home for thy correction.

Thou liest, quod she, by my salvation; 7200

Ne was I never or now, widew ne wif,

Sompned unto your court in all my lif,

Ne never I n'as but of my body trewe.

Unto the devil rough and blake of hewe

Yeve I thy body and my panne also. 7205

And whan the devil herd hire cursen so

Upon hire knees, he sayd in this manere;

Now Mabily, min moder dere,

Is this your will in earnest that ye sey?

The devil, quod she, so fetch him or he dey, 7210

And panne and all, but he wol him repent.

Nay, olde stot, that is not min entent,

Quod this Sompnour, for to repenten me

For any thing that I have had of thee:

I wold I had thy smok and every cloth. 7215

Now brother, quod the devil, be not wroth;

Thy body and this panne ben min by right:

Thou shalt with me to helle yet to-night,

Wher thou shalt knowen of our privetee

More than a maister of divinitee. 7220

And with that word the foule fend him hent

Body and soule: he with the devil went

Wher as thise Sompnours han hir heritage:

And God, that maketh after his image

Mankinde, save and gide us all and some, 7225

And lene this Sompnour good man to become.

Lordings, I coude have told you (*quod* this Frere)
 Had I had leiser for this Sompnour here;
 After the text of Crist, and Poule, and John,
 And of oure other doctours many on, 7230
 Swiche peines that your hertes might agrise,
 Al be it so that no tonge may devise,
 Though that I might a thousand winter tell,
 The peines of thiike curfed hous of hell :
 But for to kepe us fro that curfed place 7235
 Waketh and prayeth Jesu of his grace
 So kepe us fro the temptour Sathanas.
 Herkneeth this word, beware as in this cas ;
 The leon sit in his awaite alway
 To sle the innocent if that he may. 7240
 Disposeth ay your hertes to withstond
 The fend, that you wold maken thral and bond ;
 He may not tempten you over your might,
 For Crist wol be your champion and your knight ;
 And prayeth that this Sompnour him repent
 Of his misdedes or that the fend him hent. 7246

THE SOMPNOURES PROLOGUE.

THIS Sompnour in his stirops high he stood ;
 Upon this Frere his herte was so wood,
 That like an aspen leef he quoke for ire.
 Lordings, *quod* he, but o thing I desire ; 7250
 I you besече that of your curtesie,
 Sin ye han herd *this false Frere* lie,

As suffereth me I may my Tale telle.

This Frere bofleth that he knoweth helle,
And God it wot that is but litel wonder; 7255
Freres and sendes ben but litel asonder.

For parde ye han often time herd telle
How that a frere ravished was to helle
In spirit ones by a visioun,
And as an angel lad him up and down, 7260
To shewen him the peines that ther were,
In all the place saw he not a frere;
Of other folk he saw ynow in wo.

Unto this angel spake the frere tho;
Now Sire, quod he, han freres swiche a grace 7265
That non of hem shal comen in this place?

Yes, quod this angel, many a millioun;
And unto Sathanas he lad him down.
(And now hath Sathanas, saith he, a tayl
Broder than of a carrike is the sayl) 7270
Hold up thy tayl, thou Sathanas, quod he,
Shew forth thin ers, and let the frere see
Wher is the nest of freres in this place.
And er than half a furlong way of space,
Right so as bees out swarmen of an hive, 7275
Out of the devils ers ther gonnen drive
A twenty thousand freres on a route,
And thurghout hell they swarmed al aboute,

✧. 7269. (*And now hath Sathanas, saith he*] 80 mss. C. 1, A. R. 1, 2. I have put these two lines in a parenthesis, as *he* refers to the narrator, the Sompnour.

✧. 7277. *A twenty thousand*] I have added *A* for the sake of

And com agen, as fast as they may gon,
 And in his ers they crepen everich on : 7280
 He clapt his tayl agen, and lay ful still.

This frere, whan he loked had his fill
 Upon the turments of this sory place,
 His spirit God restored of his grace
 Into his body agen, and he awoke; 7285
 But natheles for fere yet he quoke,
 So was the devils ers ay in his mind,
 That is his heritage of veray kind.

God save you alle save this cursed Frere;
 My Prologue wol I end in this manere. 7290

THE SOMPNOURES TALE.

LORDINGS, there is in Yorkshire, as I gesse,
 A marsh contree ycalled Holderneffe,
 In which ther went a limitour aboute,
 To preche and eke to beg it is no doute.
 And so befell that on a day this frere 7295
 Had preched at a chirche in his manere,
 And specially aboven every thing
 Excited he the peple in his preching

the verse. Chaucer frequently prefixes it to nouns of number.
 See ver. 10697;

And up they risen, wel a ten or twelve.

The Sompnours Tale] A begging friar coming to a farmer's house who lay sick, obtaineth of the sick man a certain legacy which must be equally divided among his convent. A requital to the friar, shewing their cozenage, loitering, impudent begging, and hypocritical praying.

To trentals, and to yeve, for Goddes sake,
 Wherwith men mighten holy houses make, 7300
 Ther as divinite servite is honoured,
 Not ther as it is wasted and devoured,
 Ne ther it nedeth not for to be yeven,
 As to possessioners, that mowen leven
 (Thanked be God) in wele and abundance. 7305
 Trentals, sayd he, deliveren fro penance
 Hir frendes soules as wel olde as yonge,
 Ye, whan that they ben hastily ysonge,
 Not for to hold a prest jolif and gay,
 He singeth not but o masse on a day. 7310
 Delivereth out (quod he) anon the soules.
 Ful hard it is with fleshhook or with oules
 To ben yclawed, or to bren or bake.
 Now spede you hastily for Cristes sake.

And whan this frere had said all his entent, 7315
 With *qui cum patri* forth his way he went.
 Whan folk in chirche had yeve him what hem lest
 He went his way, no lenger wold he rest.
 With scrippe and tipped staf, ytucked hie,
 In every hous he gan to pore and prie, 7320
 And begged mele and chese, or elles corn.
 His felaw had a staf tipped with horn,
 A pair of tables all of ivory,
 And a pointel ypolished fetisly,

v. 7299. *To trentals*] *Un trentel*, Fr. was a service of thirty masses, which were usually celebrated upon as many different days, for the dead. *Du Cange*, in v. *Trentale*.

And wrote alway the names, as he stood, 7325
 Of alle folk that yave hem any good,
 Askaunce that he wolde for hem preye.
 Yeve us a bushel whete, or malt or reye,
 A Goddes kichel, or a trippe of chese,
 Or elles what you list, we may not chese; 7330

* 7327. *Askaunce that he wolde for hem preye*] The Glossary interprets *askaunce* to mean askew, aside, sideways, in a side view, upon what authority I know not. It will be better to examine the other passages in which the same word occurs before we determine the sense of it. See ver. 16306;

Askaunce that craft is so light to lere.

Tro. i. 285;

Askaunce, lo! is this not wisely spoken?

Ibid. 292;

Askaunce, what! may I not stonden here?

Lydg. Frag. fol. 136, b.;

Askaunce I am of maners most chaungeable.

In the first and last instance, as well as in the text, *askaunce* seems to signify simply *as if*, *quasi*; in the two others it signifies a little more, *as if to say*. This latter signification may be clearly established from the third line, which in the Italian original [*Philostrato di Boccaccio*, l. i.,] stands thus;

Quasi diceste, e no ci si puo stare!

So that *askaunce* is there equivalent to *quasi diceste* in Italian.—As to the etymology of this word, I must confess myself more at a loss. I observe however that one of a similar form, in the Teut. has a similar signification. *Als-kacks*, *quasi*, *quasi vero*, Kilian. Our *as* is the same with *als*, Teut. and Sax.; it is only a further corruption of *also*. Perhaps therefore *askaunce* may have been originally *als-kansse*. *Kansse*, in Teut. is *chance*, Fr. and Eng.—I will just add that this very rare phrase was also used, as I suspect, by the author of The Continuation of The Canterbury Tales, first printed by Mr. Urry. *Prol.* ver. 361;

And al *askaunce* she loved him wel, she toke him by the swere.
 It is printed a *saunce*.

* 7329. *A Goddes kichel*] "It was called *A Goddes kichel*,

A Goddes halfpeny, or a masse peny,
 Or yeve us of your braun, if ye have any,
 A dagon of your blanket, leve Dame,
 Our suster dere, (lo, here I write your name)
 Bacon or beef, or swiche thing as ye find. 7335

A sturdy harlot went hem ay behind,
 That was her hostes man, and bare a fakke,
 And what men yave hem laid it on his bakke.
 And whan that he was out at dore, anon
 He planed away the names everich on 7340
 That he before had written in his tables :
 He served hem with nisses and with fables.

Nay, ther thou liest, thou Sompnour, quod the Frere.
 Pees, quod our Hoste, for Cristes moder dere
 Tell forth thy Tale, and spare it not at all. 7345

So thrive I, quod this Sompnour, so I shall.

So long he went fro hous to hous, til he
 Came to an hous ther he was wont to be
 Refreshed more than in a hundred places.
 Sike lay the husband man whos that the place is;

"because godfathers and godmothers used commonly to give
 "one of them to their godchildren when they asked bles-
 "sing," Sp. And so we are to suppose a *Goddess halfpeny*, in ver.
 7331, was called for the same reason, &c. But this is all *gratis*
dictum I believe. The phrase is French, and the true mean-
 ing of it is explained by M. de la Monnoye in a note upon the
Contes de B. D. Periers, t. ii. p. 107, *Belle serrure de Dieu*; "Ex-
 "pression du petit peuple, qui raporte pieusement tout à Dieu.
 "—Rien n'est plus commun dans la bouche des bonnes vieilles,
 "que ces especes d'Hebraïsmes: Il m'en coute un bel ecu de
 "Dieu; Il ne me reste que ce pauvre enfant de Dieu; Donnez
 "moi une benite aumône de Dieu."

Bedred upon a couche low he lay. 7351

Deus hic, quod he; O Thomas! frend, good day,

Sayde this frere all curtisly and soft.

Thomas, quod he, God yelde it you, ful oft

Have I upon this benche faren ful wele, 7355

Here have I eten many a mery mele.

And fro the benche he drove away the cat,

And laied adoun his potent and his hat,

And eke his scrip, and set himself adoun:

His felaw was ywalked into toun, 7360

Forth with with his knave, into that hostelrye

Wher as he shope him thilke night to lie.

O dere maister! quod this like man,

How have ye faren ⁱⁿ that March began?

I saw you not this fourtene night and more. 7365

God wot, quod he, laboured have I ful fore,

And specially for thy salvation

Have I sayd many a precious orison,

And for our other frendes God hem bleffe.

I have this day ben at your chirche at messe, 7370

And said a sermon to my simple wit,

Not all after the text of holy writ,

For it is hard to you as I suppose,

And therefore wol I teche you ay the glose.

Glosing is a ful glorious thing certain, 7375

For letter sleth, so as we clerkes sain;

Ther have I taught hem to be charitable,

And spend hir good ther it is reasonable;

And ther I saw our dame; a! wher is she?

Yonder, I trow that in the yard she be, 7380
Sayde this man, and she wol come anon.

Ey maister, welcome be ye by Seint John,
Sayde this wif; how fare ye hertily?

This frere ariseth up ful curtisly,
And hire embraceth in his armes narwe, 7385
And kisseth hire swete; and chirketh as a sparwe
With his lippes. Dame, quod he, right wel,
As he that is your servant every del.

Thanked be God that you yaf soule and lif
Yet saw I not this day so faire a wif 7390
In all the chirche, God so save me.

Ye God amende defautes, Sire, quod she,
Algates welcome be ye, by my fay.

Grand mercy, Dame, that have I found alway.
But of your grete goodnesse, by your leve, 7395
I wolde pray you that ye not you greve
I wol with Thomas speke a litel throw,
Thise curates ben so negligent and slow
To gropen tendrely a conscience.

In shrift, in preching, is my diligence 7400
And study, in Peters wordes and in Poules;
I walke and fishe Cristen mennes soules,
To yeld our Lord Jesu his propre rent;
To sprede his word is sette all min entent.

Now by your faith, o dere Sire! quod she, 7405
Chideth him wel for Seinte Charitee:

He is ay angry as is a pissenire
 Though that he have all that he can desire ;
 Though I him wrie a-night, and make him warm,
 And over him lay my leg and eke min arm, 7410
 He groneth as our bore lith in our sie :
 Other disport of him right non have I ;
 I may not plesse him in no maner cas.

O Thomas, *jeu vous die*, Thomas, Thomas !
 This maketh the fend, this muste ben amended. 7415
 Ire is a thing that high God hath defended,
 And therof wol I speke a word or two.

Now maister, quod the wif, er that I go,
 What wol ye dine ? I wol go therabout.

Now Dame, quod he, *jeu vous die sanz doute*, 7420
 Have I not of a capon but the liver,
 And of your white bred nat but a shiver,
 And after that a roasted pigges hed,
 (But I ne wolde for me no beest were ded)
 Than had I with you homly suffisance ; 7425
 I am a man of little sustenance :

My spirit hath his fostring in the Bible :
 My body is ay so ready and so penible
 To waken that my stomak is destroyed.
 I pray you, Dame, that ye be nought annoied 7430
 Though I so frendly you my conseil shewe ;
 By God I n'old have told it but a few.

Now Sire, quod she, but o word er I go.
 My child is ded within thise wekes two,

And ther I saw our dame ; a ! wher is she ?

Yonder, I trow that in the yard she be, 7380

Sayde this man, and she wol come anon.

Ey maister, welcome be ye by Seint John,

Sayde this wif ; how fare ye hertily ?

This frere ariseth up ful curtisly,

And hire embraceth in his armes narwe, 7385

And kisseth hire swete ; and chirketh as a sparwe

With his lippes. Dame, quod he, right wel,

As he that is your servant every del.

Thanked be God that you yaf soule and lif

Yet saw I not this day so faire a wif 7390

In all the chirche, God so save me.

Ye God amende defantes, Sire, quod she,

Algates welcome be ye, by my fay.

Grand mercy, Dame, that have I found alway.

But of your grete goodnesse, by your leve, 7395

I wolde pray you that ye not you greve

I wol with Thomas speke a litel throw,

This curates ben so negligent and slow

To gropen tendrely a conscience.

In shrift, in preching, is my diligence 7400

And study, in Peters wordes and in Poules ;

I walke and fishe Cristen mennes soules,

To yeld our Lord Jesu his propre rent ;

To sprede his word is sette all min entent.

Now by your faith, o dere Sire ! quod she, 7405

Chideth him wel for Seinte Charitee :

He is ay angry as is a pissenire
 Though that he have all that he can desire ;
 Though I him wrie a-night, and make him warm,
 And over him lay my leg and eke min arm, 7410
 He groneth as our bore lish in our stie :
 Other disport of him right non have I ;
 I may not plesse him in no maner cas.

O Thomas, *jeo vous die*, Thomas, Thomas !
 This maketh the fend, this muste ben amended. 7415
 Ire is a thing that high God hath defended,
 And therof wol I speke a word or two.

Now maister, quod the wif, er that I go,
 What wol ye dine ? I wol go therabout.

Now Dame, quod he, *jeo vous die sanz doute*, 7420
 Have I not of a capon but the liver,
 And of your white bred nat but a shiver,
 And after that a roasted pigges hed,
 (But I ne wolde for me no beest were ded)
 Than had I with you homly suffisance ; 7425
 I am a man of little sustenance :
 My spirit hath his fostring in the Bible :
 My body is ay so ready and so penible
 To waken that my stomak is destroyed.
 I pray you, Dame, that ye be nought annoied 7430
 Though I so frendly you my conseil shewe ;
 By God I n'old have told it but a few.

Now Sire, quod she, but o word er I go.
 My child is ded within thise wekes two,

Sone after that ye went out of this town. 743
 His deth saw I by revelatioun,
 Sayde this fress, at home in our dortour.
 I dare wel sain that er than half an-hour
 After his deth I saw him borne to blisse
 In min avision, so God me wisse; 744
 So did our sextein and our fermerere,
 That han ben trewe freres fifty yere;
 They may now, God be thanked of his lone,
 Maken hir jubilee, and walke alone.
 And up I arose, and all our covent eke, 744
 With many a tere trilling on our cheke,
 Withouten noise or clatering of belles,
Te deum was our song, and nothing elles,
 Save that to Crist I bade an orison,
 Thanking him of my revelation. 745
 For, Sire and Dame, trusteth me right wel
 Our orisons ben more effectuel,
 And more we seen of Cristes secree thinges,
 Than borel folk, although that they be kinges.
 We live in poverte and in abstinence, 745
 And borel folk in richesse and dispence
 Of mete and drinke, and in hir foule delit:
 We han this worldes lust all in despit.

v. 7442. *fifty yere*] See *Du Cange*, in v. *Sempetæ*. Peculi-
 honours and immunities were granted by the rule of St. Bern-
 dict to those monks "qui quinquaginta annos in ordine ex-
 "gerant, quos annum jubileum exegisse vulgo dicimus."
 is probable that some similar regulation obtained in the other
 orders.

Lazar and Dives livenen diversely,
 And divers guerdon hadden they therby. 7460
 Who so wol pray he must fast and be cleue,
 And fat his soule and make his body leue.
 We fare as sayth the apostle; cloth and food
 Sufficeth us though they be not ful good.
 The cleneneffe and the fasting of us freres 7465
 Maketh that Crist accepteth our praieres.

Lo, Moises forty daies and forty night
 Fasted er that the high God ful of might
 Spake with him in the mountagne of Sinay :
 With empty wombe of fasting many a day 7470
 Received he the lawe that was written
 With Goddes finger : and Eli, wel ye witen,
 In Mount Oreb, er he had any speche
 With highe God, that is our lives leche,
 He fasted long, and was in contemplanse. 7475

Aaron, that had the temple in governance,
 And eke the other preestes everich on,
 Into the temple whan they shulden gon
 To praien for the peple, and do servise,
 They n'olden drinken in no maner wise 7480
 No drinke which that might hem dronken make,
 But ther in abstinence pray and wake
 Lest that they deiden. Take heed what I say—
 But they be sobre that for the peple pray—
 Ware that I say—No more; for it sufficeth. 7485
 Our Lord Jesu, as holy writ deviseth,

Yave us enfample of fasting and praieres;
 Therefore we mendianta, we sely freres,
 Ben wedded to poverté and continence,
 To charitee, humbleste, and abstinence, 7490
 To persequen for rightwisnesse,
 To weping, misericorde, and to clenenesse;
 And therefore may ye see that our praieres
 (I speke of us, we mendianta, we freres)
 Ben to the highe God more acceptable 7495
 Than youres, with your festes at your table.

Fro Paradis first, if I shal not lie,
 Was man out chased for his glotonie;
 And chaste was man in Paradis certain.
 But herken now, Thomas, what I shal sain: 7500
 I have no text of it as I suppose, ..
 But I shal find it in a maner glose;
 That specially our swete Lord Jesus
 Spake this by freres whan he sayde thus,
 Blessed be they that poure in spirit ben; 7505
 And so forth all the gospels may ye sen
 Whether it be liker our profession
 Or hire that swimmen in possession.
 Fie on hir pompe, and on hir glotonie,
 And on hir lewednesse! I hem desie. 7510

v. 7488. *mendianta*] In ms. *A.* it is *mendinants*, both here
 and below, ver. 7494, which reading, though not agreeable to
 analogy, is perhaps the true one, as I find the word constantly
 so-spelled in the stat. 12 R. II. c. 7, 8, 9, 10.

Me thinketh they ben like Jovinian,
 Fat as a whale, and walken as a swan;
 Al vinolent as botel in the spence;
 Hir praier is of ful gret reverence:
 Whan they for soules say the Psalm of Davit, 7515
 Lo, bus they say, *Cor meum erubuit.*

Who soloweth Cristes gospel and his lore
 But we, that humble ben, and chaste and pore,
 Workers of Goddes word, not auditours?
 Therfore right as an hawke upon a sours 7520
 Up springeth into the aire, right so praieres
 Of charitable and chaste besy freres
 Maken hir sours to Goddes eres two.
 Thomas, Thomas! so mote I ride or go,
 And by that lord that cleped is Seint Ive, 7525
 N'ere thou our broder shuldest thou not thrive.
 In our chapitre pray we day and night
 To Crist that he thee sende hele and might

¶ 7511. *Jovinian*] Against whom St. Jerome wrote, or perhaps the supposed emperour of that name in the *Gesta Romanorum*, c. lix, whose story was worked up into a morality, under the title of *L'orgueil et presumption de l'Empereur Jovinian*—à 19 personages. It was printed at Lyons 1581, 8vo, *sur une vieille copie*. Du Verdier, in v. *Jovinien*.—The same story is told of a Robert King of Sicily, in an old English poem, ms. Harl. 1701. Mr. Warton has given large extracts from an Oxford ms. as I suppose, of the same poem, *Hist. of Eng. Po.* p. 184.

¶ 7514. *of ful gret reverence*] The editt. have changed this to *ful litel*; but the reading of the ms. may stand, if it be understood ironically.

Thy body for to welden hastily.

God wot, quod he, nothing therof fele I. 7530

As help me Crist, as I in fewe yeres

Have spended upon divers maner freres

Eul many a pound, yet fare I never the bet;

Certain my good have I almost beset:

Farewel my good, for it is al ago. 7535

The frere answered, O Thomas! dost thou so?

What nedeth you diverse freres to seche?

What nedeth him that hath a parfit leche

To sechen other leches in the toun?

Your inconstance is your confusion. 7540

Hold ye than me, or elles our covent,

To pray for you ben insufficient?

Thomas, that jape n'is not worth a mite;

Your maladie is for we han to lite.

A! yeve that covent half a quarter otes, 7545

And yeve that covent four-and-twenty grotes,

And yeve that frere a peny and let him go:

Nay, nay, Thomas, it may no thing be so.

What is a ferthing worth parted on twelve?

Lo, eche thing that is oned in himselve 7550

Is more strong than whan it is yscatered.

'Thomas, of me thou shalt not ben yflatered,

'Thou woldest han our labour al for nought.

'The highe God, that all this world hath wrought,

Saith that the workman worthy is his hire. 7555

'Thomas, nought of your trefor I desire

As for myself, but that all our covent
 To pray for you is ay so diligent,
 And for to bilden Cristes owen chirche.
 Thomas, if ye wol lernen for to wirche, 7560
 Of bilding up of chirches may ye finde
 If it be good in Thomas lif of Inde.

Ye ligen here ful of anger and of ire,
 With which the devil set your herte on fire,
 And chiden here this holy innocent, 7565
 Your wif, that is so good and patient;
 And therefore trow me, Thomas, if thee left,
 Ne strive not with thy wif, as for the best.
 And bere this word away now by thy faith,
 Touching swiche thing, lo, what the wise saith: 7570

Within thy hous ne be thou no leon,
 To thy suggets do non oppressioun,
 Ne make thou not thin acquaintance to flee.

And yet, Thomas, eftsones charge I thee
 Beware from ire that in thy bosom slepeth; 7575
 Ware fro the serpent that so slyly crepeth
 Under the gras, and stingeth subtilly:
 Beware, my sone, and herken patiently
 That twenty thousand men han lost hir lives
 For striving with hir lemmans and hir wives. 7580
 Now sith ye han so holy and meek a wif,
 What nedeth you, Thomas, to maken strif?
 Ther n'is ywis no serpent so cruel,
 Whan man tredeth on his tail, ne half so fel,

As woman is when she hath caught an hnd; 7583
 Veray vengeance is then all hire desire.

Ire is a sinne unof the grete seven,
 Abhominable unto the God of heven,
 And to himselfe it is destruction:
 This every lewed wight and person 7590
 Can say how it engendreth homicide:
 Ire is in feith excusour of pride.

I coulde of ire say so muchel forwe
 My Tale shulde lasten til to-morwe;
 And therefore pray I God both day and night 7593
 An irous man God send him like might.
 It is gret harme, and certen gret pitee;
 To sette an irous man in high degree.

Whilom ther was an irous potestat,
 As saith Senek, that during his estat 7600
 Upon a day out riden knighten two;
 And, as Fortune wold that it were so,
 That on of hem came home, that other sought.
 Anon the knight before the jage is brought,
 That saide thus; Thou hast thy felaw slain, 7603
 For which I demer thee to the deth certain.
 And to another knight commanded he,
 Go, lede him to the deth, I charge thee.
 And happed as they wenten by the way
 Toward the place ther as he shulde dry, 7610

†. 7600. *As saith Senek*] This story is told by Seneca, *de Ira*, l. i. c. xvi, of Cæ. Nip. It is also told of an emperor *Excellens Cæsa Romanorum*, cap. cxi.

The knight came which men wenden had be ded :
 Than thoughten they it was the beste rede
 To lede hem bothe to the juge again.
 They saiden, Lord, the knight ne hath not slain
 His felaw, here he stondeth hol alive. 7615

Ye shull be ded, quod he, so mot I thrive,
 That is to say, both on, and two, and three.
 And to the firste knight right thus spake he.
 I damned thee, thou must algate be ded ;
 And thou also must nedes lese thy hed, 7620
 For thou art cause why thy felaw deyeth ;
 And to the thridde knight right thus he seyeth,
 Thou hast not don that I commanded thee.
 And thus he did do slen hem alle three.

Irous Cambises was eke dronkelew, 7625
 And ay delighted him to ben a shrew ;
 And so befell a lord of his meinie,
 That loved vertuous moralitee,
 Sayd on a day betwix hem two right thus ;
 A lord is lost if he be vicious ; 7630
 And dronkennesse is eke a foule record
 Of any man, and namely of a lord.
 Ther is ful many an eye and many an ere
 Awaiting on a lord, and he n'ot wher.
 For Goddes love drink more attemprely : 7635
 Win maketh man to lcsen wretchedly

*. 7625. *Irous Cambises*] This story is also in *Seneca*, l. iii. c. xiv. : it differs a little from one in *Heracles*, l. iii.

His mind, and eke his limmes everich on.
 The revers shalt thou see, quod he, anon,
 And preve it by thyn owen experience
 That win ne doth to folk no swiche offence. 764
 Ther is no win bereveth me my might
 Of hond, ne foot, ne of min eyen sight.
 And for despit he dranke mochel more
 An hundred part than he had don before,
 And right anon this cursed irous wretche 764
 This knightes sone let before him fetchen,
 Commanding him he shuld before him stond;
 And sodenly he took his bow in hond,
 And up the streng he pulled to his ere,
 And with an arwe he slow the child right ther. 765
 Now whether have I a siker hond or non?
 Quod he; is all my might and minde agon?
 Hath win bereved me min eyen sight?
 What shuld I tell the answer of the knight?
 His son was slain, ther is no more to say. 765
 Beth ware therfore with lordes for to play,
 Singeth Placebo, and I shal if I can,
 But if it be unto a poure man:
 To a poure man men shuld his vices telle,
 But not to a lord, though he shuld go to helle. 766

†. 7657. *Singeth Placebo*] The allusion is to an anthem in the Romish church from *Psalms* cxvi. 9, which in the Vulgate stands thus; *Placebo Domino in regione vivorum*. Hence the complacent brother in 'The Marchant's Tale' is called *Placebo*.

Lo, irous Cirus, thilke Perfien,
 How he destroyed the river of Gisen,
 For that an hora of his was dreint therin
 Whan that he wente Babilon to win :
 He made that the river was so smal 7665
 That wimmen might it waden over al.
 Lo, what, said he, that so wel techen can ?
 Ne be no felaw to non irous man,
 Ne with no wood man walke by the way,
 Lest thee repent : I wol no forther say. 7670

Now Thomas, leve brother, leve thin ire,
 Thou shalt me find as just as is a squire :
 Hold not the devils knif ay to thin herte,
 Thin anger doth thee all to fore smerte ;
 But shew to me all thy confession. 7675

Nay, quod the like man, by Seint Simon
 I have ben shriven this day of my curat ;
 I have him told al holly min estat.
 Nedeth no mo to speke of it, sayth he,
 But if me list of min humilitee. 7680

Yeve me than of thy gold to make our cloistre,
 Quod he, for many a muscle and many an oistre,

ψ. 7662. *the river of Gisen*] It is called *Gyndes* in *Seneca*, lib. cit. c. xxi, and in *Herodotus*, l. i.

ψ. 7666. *That wimmen*] So the best mss. agreeably to the authors just quoted. The edit. have——

That *men* might ride and wade, &c.

Sir J. Mandeville tells the story of the Euphrates—"Because that he had sworn that he sholde putte the ryvere in suche poynt that a *womman* myghte wel passe there withouten castyng of of hire clothes," p. 49.

Whan other men han ben ful wel at ese;
 Hath been our food, our cloistre for to rese;
 And yet, Godi wot, unneth the fundament 768
 Parfourmed is; ne of our pavement
 N'is not a tile yet within our wones;
 By God we owen fourty pound for stones.
 Now help, Thomas, for him that harwed helle,
 For elles mote we our bokes selle, 769
 And if ye lacke oure predication;
 Than goth this world all to destruction;
 For who so fro this world wold us bereve,
 So God me save, Thomas, by your leve
 He wold bereve out of this world the sonne; 769
 For who can teche and worken as we conne?
 And that is not of litel time (quod he)
 But sithen Elie was and Elisee
 Han freres ben, that find I of record,
 In charitee, ythanked be our Lord. 770
 Now Thomas, help for Seinte Charitee.

And doun anon he sette him on his knee.

This fike man woxe wel neigh wood for ire;
 He wolde that the frere had ben a-fire
 With his false dissimulation. 770

Swiche thing as is in my possession,
 Quod he, that may I yeve you, and non other.
 Ye sain me thus, how that I am your brother.
 Ye certes, quod this frere, ye trusteth wel;
 I took our dame the letter of our sele. 771

¶ 7710. *the letter of our sele*] There is a letter of this kind

Now wel, quod he, and somewhat shal I yeve
 Unto your holy cōtent while I live;
 And in thin hond thou shalt it have anon,
 On this condition, and other non,
 That thou depart it so, my dere brother, 7713
 That every frere have as moche as other:
 This shalt thou swere on thy profession
 Withouten fraud or cavilation.

I swere it, quod the frere, upon my faith;
 And therwithal his hond in his he layth. 7720
 Lo here my faith; in me shal be no lak.

Than put thin hond adoun right by my bak,
 Saide this man, and grope wel behind
 Benethe my buttoke, ther thou shalt find
 A thing that I have hid in privetee. 7725
 A! thought this frere, that shal go with me;
 And doun his hond he launcheth to the clifte,
 In hope for to finden ther a gifte.

And whan this like man felte this frere
 About his towel gropen ther and here, 7730
 Amid his hond he let the frere a fart:
 Ther n'is no capel drawing in a cart
 That might han let a fart of swiche a soun.
 The frere up sterte as doth a wood leoun:

in *Stevens, Supp. to Dugd. vol. ii. App. p. 370*; "Fratres Præ-
 "dicatores, Warwicc. admittunt Thomam Cannings et ux-
 "orem ejus Agnetem ad participationem omnium bonorum
 "operum conventus ejusdem." It is under seal of the Prior,
 4 *Non. Octob. An. Dom. 1347*.

THE SOMPTNOURES TALE;

4
A! false chere, quod he, for Goddes bones
This hast thou in despit don for the nones:
Thou shalt abie this fart if that I may.

7733

His meinie, which that herden this affray,
Came leping in, and chased out the frere,
And forth he goth with a ful angry chere,

7740

And fet his felaw ther as lay his store:
He loket as it were a wilde bore,
And grinte with his teeth, so was he wroth.

A sturdy pas down to the court he goth,
Wher as ther woned a man of gret honour,

7743

To whom that he was alway confessor:
This worthy man was lord of that village,
This frere came, as he were in a rage,

Wher as this lord sat eting at his bord:
Unnerthes might the frere speke o word,

7

Til atte last he saide, God you see!
This lord gan loke, and saide, *Benedicite!*
What? Frere John, what maner world is this?
I see wel that som thing ther is amis;

Ye loken as the wood were ful of theves.
Sit down anon, and tell me what your greve is

7. 7740.] The remainder of this Tale is omitted
G. and Bod. C. and instead of it they give us the follo
and impotent conclusion;

He ne had nozt ellis for his sermon
To part among his brethren when he cam home.
And thus is this Tale idon,
For we were almost att the toun.

I only mention this to shew what liberties some
taken with our Author.

And it shal ben amended if I may.

I have, quod he, had a despit to day,
God yelde you, adoun in your village,
That in this world ther n'is so poure a page 7760
That he n'olde have abhominatioun

Of that I have received in youre toun;
And yet ne greveth me nothing so fore
As that the olde cherl with lokkes hore
Blasphemed hath oure holy covent eke. 7765

Now maister, quod this lord, I you beseke.

No maister, Sire, quod he, but servitour,
Though I have had in scole that honour.
God liketh not that men us Rabi call
Neither in market ne in your large hall. 7770

No force, quod he, but tell me all your grefe.

Sire, quod this frere, an odiours mischefe
This day betid is to min ordre and me,
And so *per consequens* to eche degree
Of holy chirche, God amende it sone. 7775

Sire, quod the lord, ye wot what is to don :
Distempre you not, ye ben my confessor ;
Ye ben the salt of the erthe and the favour :
For Goddes love your patience now hold ;
Telle me your grefe. And he anon him told 7780
As ye han herd before, ye wot wel what.

The lady of the hous ay stille sat
Til she had herde what the frere said.

Ey, Goddes moder, quod she, blisful maid !

Is ther ought elles? tell me faithfully. 7783

Madame, quod he, how thinketh you thereby?

How that me thinketh? quod she; so God me speke

I say a cherl hath don a cherles dede.

What shuld I say? God let him never the;

His like hed is ful of vanities;

I hold him in a manner frenetic. 7790

Madame, quod he, by God I shal not lie

But I in other wise may ben awreke;

I shal diffame him over all ther I speke;

This false blasphemour, that charged me

To parten that wol not departed be

To every man ylike, with meschance. 7795

The lord sat stille as he were in a trance,

And in his herte he rolled up and down

How had this cherl imaginacioun

To shewen swiche a problem to the frere.

Never erst or now ne herd I swiche matere;

I trow the devil put it in his mind.

In all arismetrike shal ther no man find

Beforen this day of swiche a question.

Who shulde make a demonstration

That every man shuld han ylike his part

As of a soun or favour of a fart?

O nice proude cherl! I shrewe his face. 7805

I.o, Sires, quod the lord, with harde grace, 7810

Who ever herd of swiche a thing or now?

To every man ylike! tell me how.

It is an impossible, it may not be :

Ey, nice cherl ! God let him never the.

The rombling of a fart, and every foun, 7815

N'is but of aire reverberatioun,

And ever it wasteth lite and lite away ;

Ther n'is no man can demen, by my fay,

If that it were departed equally.

What ? lo my cherl, lo yet how shrewedly 7820

Unto my confessor to-day he spake !

I hold him certain a demoniake.

Now etc your mete, and let the cherl go play ;

Let him go honge himself a devil way.

Now stood the lordes squier atte bord 7825

That carf his mete, and herde word by word

Of all this thing of which I have you sayd.

My Lord, quod he, be ye not evil apaid ;

I coude telle for a gounce-cloth

To you, Sire Frere, so that ye be not wroth, 7830

How that this fart shuld even ydeled be

Amonge your covent, if it liked thee.

Tell, quod the lord, and thou shalt have anon

A gounce-cloth, by God and by Seint John.

My Lord, quod he, whan that the weder is faire,

Withouten winde or pertourbing of aire, 7836

Let bring a cart-whele here into this hall,

But loke that it have his spokes all ;

Twelf spokes hath a cart-whele comunly ;

And bring me *than* twelf freres, wete ye why ? 7840

For threttene is a covent as I gesse :
 Your confessor here for his worthinesse
 Shal parfourme up the noumbre of his covent,
 Than shull they knele adoun by on assent,
 And to every spokes end in this manere
 Ful sadly lay his nose shal a frere;
 Your noble confessor, ther God him save,
 Shal hold his nose upright under the nave.
 Than shal this cherl, with bely stif and tought
 As any tabour, hider ben ybrought;
 And set him on the whele right of this eart
 Upon the nave, and make him let a fart,
 And ye shull seen, up peril of my lif,
 By veray preef that is demonstratif,
 That equally the foun of it wol wende,
 And eke the flinke, unto the spokes ende,
 Save that this worthy man, your confessor,
 (Because he is a man of gret honour)
 Shal han the firste fruit, as reson is.
 The noble usage of freres yet it is
 The worthy men of hem shul first be served,
 And certainly he hath it wel deserved;
 He hath to-day taught us so mochel good,
 With preching in the pulpit ther he stood,
 That I may vouchesauf, I say for me,
 He hadde the firste smel of fartes three,
*And so wold all his brethren hardely,
 He bereth him so faire and holyly.*

The lord, the lady, and eche man, save the frere,
 Sayden that Jankin spake in this materq 7870
 As wel as Euclide or elles Ptholomee.
 Touching the cherl they sayden; Subtiltee
 And highe wit made him speken as he spake;
 He n'is no fool ne no demoniake.
 And Jankin hath ywonne a newe gounne.
 My Tale is don, we ben almost at tounne. 7876

THE CLERKES PROLOGUE.

SIRE Clerk of Oxenforde, our Hoste said,
 Ye ride as stille and coy as doth a maid
 Were newe spoused, sitting at the bord;
 This day ne herd I of your tonge a word. 7880
 I trow ye studie abouten som sophisme;
 But Salomon saith that every thing hath time.
 For Goddes sake as beth of better chere,
 It is no time for to studien here.
 Tell us som mery Tale by your fay; 7885
 For what man that is entred in a play
 He nedes most unto the play assent.
 But precheth not, as freres don in Lent,
 To make us for our olde finnes wepe,
 Ne that thy Tale make us not to slepe. 7890

†. 7879. *Were newe spoused*] It has been observed in n. upon ver. 812, that Chaucer frequently omits the governing pronoun before his verbs: the instances there cited were of personal pronouns. In this line, and some others which I thail point out here, the relatives *who* or *which* are omitted in the same manner. See ver. 7411, 13035, 16049.

THE CLERKS PROLOGUE.

Tell us from mery thing of adventures;
 Your termes, your coloures, and your figures,
 Kepe hem in store til so be ye endide
 Hic stile, as whan that men to kinges write.
 Speketh so plain at this time, I you pray,
 That we may understonden what ye say.

7893

This worthy Clerk benignely answerde;
 Hoftē, quod he, I am under your yerde,
 Ye have of us as now the governance,
 And therfore wolde I do you obeyfance,
 As fer as reison asketh hardely:

7900

I wol you tell a Tale which that I
 Lerned at Padowe of a worthy clerk,
 As preved by his wordes and his werk:
 He is now ded and nailed in his cheste,
 I pray to God so yeve him soule reste.
 Fraunceis Petrark, the Laureat poete,
 Highte this clerk, whos rethorike swete
 Enlumined all Itaille of poetrie,
 As Lynyan did of philosophie

7900

¶ 7910. Lynyan] Or Linian. The person meant was a
 rent lawyer, and made a great noise (as we say) in his
 His name of late has been so little known that I believe
 has been angry with the editr. for calling him *Lirvian*
 is some account of him in *Panzirulus, de Cl. Leg. Interp.*
 c. xxv.; "Joannes a *Lignano*, agri Mediolanensis vic
 "dus, et ob id *Lignanus* dictus," &c. One of his work
Tractatus de Bello, is extant in ms. Reg. 13, B. ix. He
 it at Bologna in the year 1360.—He was not howe
 lawyer; Chaucer speaks of him as excelling also in
 and so does his epitaph, ap. Panziral. l. c.;

or other art particulere ;
 h, that wol not suffre us dwellen here,
 t were a twinkling of an eye,
 oth hath flaine, and alle we shul dye.
 forth to tellen of this worthy man 7915
 aughte me this Tale as I began,
 hat first he with highe stile enditeth
 e the body of his Tale writeth)
 oheme, in the which describeth he
 ont, and of Saluces the contree, 7920
 l speketh of Apeunin the hilles hie,
 at ben the boundes of west Lumbardie,
 d of Mount Vesulus in special,
 her as the Poo out of a welle smal
 keth his firste springing and his fours, 7925
 at estward ay encrefeth in his cours
 o Emelie ward, to Ferare and Venise,
 e which a longe thing were to devise ;

Gloria Lignani, titulu decoratus utroque,
 Legibus et sacro Canone dives erat,

Alter Aristoteles, Hippocras erat et Ptolomæus—

e only specimen of his philosophy that I have met with is
 ms. Harl. 1006. It is an astrological work, entitled "Con-
 clusiones Judicii composite per Dominum Johannem de Ly-
 niano (l. Lyniano) super coronacione Domini Urbani Pape VI.
 A. D. 1378, 18th April, &c. cum Diagrammate." He also
 reported the election of Urban as a lawyer, *Panzirrol. l. c. et*
ital. Eccles. a Raynaldo, tom. xvii. He must therefore have
 lived at least to 1378, though in the printed epitaph he is said
 have died in 1368, 16th Febr.

v. 7927. *To Emelie ward*] One of the regions of Italy was
 called *Emilia*, from the *Via Emilia*, which crossed it from Pia-

THE CLERKES TALE.

7930

d trewely, as to my jugement,
e thinketh it a thing impertinent,
ve that he wol conveyen his matere :
ut this is the Tale which that ye mow here.

THE CLERKES TALE.

79

THER is right at the west side of Itaille,
Doun at the rote of Vesulus the cold,
A lusty plain habundant of vitaille,
Ther many a toun and tour thos maist behold,
That founded were in time of fathers old,
And Saluces this noble contree highte,
A markis whilom lord was of that lond,
As were his worthy elders him before,
And obeysant, ay redy to his hond,
Were all his lieges bothe lesse and more :
Thus in delit he liveth, and hath don yore,
Beloved and drad, thurgh favour of Fortu
Both of his lordes and of his commune.

centia to Rimini. Placentia stood upon the Po, P.
Rom. in v. *Via Emilia*. Petrarch's description
the course of the Po is a little different. He sp
viding the *Emilian* and *Flaminian* regions from
" *Flamin* atque *Flaminiam* *Venetiam*que discerit
Author's *Emilie* is plainly taken from him.—
Tale is almost wholly translated from Petrar
course, &c. [20,] it would be endless to
sages from the original, especially as it is pr
tions of Petrarch's works; it is there entire
Vide Uxoriam Mythologia.

The Clerk's Tale] Walter the Marquis
paciencie of his wife Grisild by thre mo'

Therwith he was, to speken of linage,
 The gentilest yborne of Lumbardie,
 A faire person, and strong, and yong of age,
 And ful of honour and of curtesie; 7950
 Discret ynough, his contree for to gie,
 Sauf in som thinges that he was to blame,
 And Walter was this yonge lordes name.

I blame him thus, that he considered nought
 In time coming what might him betide, 7955
 But on his lust present was all his thought,
 And for to hauke and hunt on every side;
 Wel neigh all other cures let he slide;
 And eke he n'old (and that was worst of all)
 Wedden no wif for ought that might befall. 7960

Only that point his peple bare so fore
 That flockmel on a day to him they went,
 And on of hem, that wisest was of lore,
 (Or elles that the lord wold best assent
 That he shuld tell him what the peple ment, 7965
 Or elles coude he wel shew swiche matere)
 He to the markis said as ye shull here.

O noble Markis! your humanitee
 Assureth us and yeveth us hardinesse,
 As oft as time is of necessitee 7970
 That we to you now tell our hevinesse;
 Accepteth, Lord, than of your gentillesse
 That we with pitous herte unto you plaine,
 And let your cress nat my vois disdaine.

THE CLERKES TALE.

7975.

I not to don in this matere
another man hath in this place,
moch as ye, my Lord so dere,
y shewed me favour and grace,
e better aske of you a space
ence to shewen our request,
my Lord, to don right as you left.

7980

certes, Lord, so wel us liketh you
ll your werke, and ever have don, that we
ouden not ourself devisen how
mighten live in more felicittee,
e o thing, Lord, if it your wille be
at for to be a wedded man you left
an were your peple in soverain hertes rest.
Boweth your nekke under the blisful yok

7985

Of soveraintee, and not of servise,
Which that men clepen Spousaile or Wedlok :
And thinketh, Lord, among your thoughtes wil
How that our dayes passe in sondry wise;
For though we slepe, or wake, or rome, or rid
Ay flethe the time, it wol no man abide.

7

And though your grene youthe floure as y
In crepeth age alway as still as ston,
And deth manafeth every age, and smit
In eche estat, for ther escapeth non :
And al so certain as we knowe eche on
That we shul die, as uncertain we all
Ben of that day whan deth shal on us fall

Accepteth than of us the trewe entent,
That never yet refuseden your hest,
And we wol, Lord, if that ye wol assent, 8005
Chese you a wife in short time at the mest
Borne of the gentillest and of the best
Of all this lond, so that it oughte seme
Honour to God and you, as we can deme.

Deliver us out of all this besy drede, 8010
And take a wif for highe Goddes sake;
For if it so befell, as God forbede,
That thurgh your deth your linage shulde flake,
And that a strange successour shuld take
Your heritage, o! wo were us on live; 8015
Wherfore we pray you hastily to wive.

Hir meke praier and hir pitous chere
Made the markis for to han pitee.
Ye wol, quod he, min owen peple-dere,
To that I never er thought constrainen me: 8020
I me rejoyced of my libertee,
That selden time is found in mariage;
Ther I was free I moste ben in servage.

But natheles I see your trewe entent,
And trust upon your wit, and have don ay; 8025
Wherfore of my free will I wol assent
To wedden me as sone as ever I may:
But ther as ye han profred me to-day
To chesen me a wif, I you relese
That chois, and pray you of that profer case. 8030

For God it wot that children often ben
 Unlike hir worthy eldres hem before :
 Bountee cometh al of God, not of the stren
 Of which they ben ygendred and ybore :
 I trust in Goddes bountee, and therfore 8035
 My mariage, and min estat, and rest,
 I him betake ; he may don as him lest.

Let me alone in chesing of my wif ;
 That charge upon my bak I wol endure ;
 But I you pray and charge upon your lif 8040
 That what wif that I take ye me assure
 To worship hire, while that hire lif may dure,
 In word and werk both here and elles where,
 As she an emperoures doughter were.

And forthermore this shuln ye swere, that ye 8045
 Again my chois shul never grutch ne strive ;
 For sith I shal forgo my libertee
 At your request, as ever mote I thrive
 Ther as min herte is set ther wol I wive :
 And but ye wol assent in swiche manere 8050
 I pray you speke no more of this matere.

With hertly will they sworn and assenten
 To all this thing, ther saide not o wight nay,
 Beseching him of grace, or that they wenten,
 That he wold granten hem a certain day 8055
 Of his spoufaile as sone as ever he may,
 For yet alway the peple somewhat dred
 Lest that this markis wolde no wif wed.

He granted hem a day, swiche as him lest,
 On which he wold be wedded likerly, 8060
 And said he did all this at hir request;
 And they with humble herte ful buxumly,
 Kneling upon hir knees ful reverently,
 Him thonken all: and thus they han an end
 Of hir entente, and home agen they wend. 8065

And hereupon he to his officeres
 Commandeth for the feste to purvay,
 And to his privee knightes and squieres
 Swiche charge he yave as hem list on hem lay,
 And they to his commandement obey, 8070
 And eche of hem doth al his diligence
 To do unto the feste al reverence.

Pars secunda.

Nought fer fro thilke paleis honourable,
 Wher as this markis shope his mariage,
 Ther stood a thorpe, of sighte delitable, 8075
 In which that poure folk of that village
 Hadden hir bestes and hir herbergage,
 And of hir labour toke hir sustenance,
 After that the erthe yave hem habundance.

Among this poure folk ther dwelt a man 8080
 Which that was holden pourest of hem all,
 But highe God somtime senden can
 His grace unto a litel oxes stall;
 Janicola men of that thorpe him call:
 A doughter had he, faire ynough to sight, 8085
 And Grisildis this yonge maiden hight.

But for to speke of vertuous beautee,
Than was she on the fairest under sonne.
Ful pourely yfostred up was she;
No likerous lust was in hire herte yronne: 8
Wel oster of the well than of the tonne
She dranke; and for she wolde vertue please
She knew wel labour but non idel ese.

But though this mayden tendre were of age,
Yet in the brest of hire virginitee 8
Ther was enclosed sad and ripe corage,
And in gret reverence and charitee
Hire olde poure fader fostred she:
A few sheep spinning on the feld she kept;
She wolde not ben idel til she slept. 8

And whan she homward came she wolde bring
Wortes and other herbes times oft,
The which she shred and sethe for hire living,
And made hire bed ful hard and nothing soft;
And ay she kept hire fadres lif on lost 8
With every obeisance and diligence
That child may don to fadres reverence.

Upon Grisilde, this poure creature,
Ful often sithe this markis sette his eye,
As he on hunting rode paraventure; 8
And whan it fell that he might hire espie
He not with wanton loking of folie
His eyen cast on hire, but in sad wise
Upon hire chere he wold him oft avise;

Commending in his herte hire womanhede, 8115
 And eke hire vertue, passing any wight
 Of so yong age as wel in chere as dede :
 For though the peple have no gret insight
 In vertue, he considered ful right
 Hire bountee, and disposed that he wold 8120
 Wedde hire only if ever he wedden shold.

The day of wedding came, but no wight can
 Tellen what woman that it shulde be,
 For which marvaile wondred many a man,
 And saiden, whan they were in privetee, 8125
 Wol not our lord yet leve his vanitee ?
 Wol he not wedde ? Alas, alas the while !
 Why wol he thus himself and us begile ?

But natheles this markis hath do make
 Of gemmes sette in gold and in asure 8130
 Broches and ringes, for Grisildes sake ;
 And of hire clothing toke he the mesure
 Of a maiden like unto hire stature,
 And eke of other ornamentes all
 That unto swiche a wedding shulde fall. 8135

The time of underne of the same day
 Approcheth that this wedding shulde be,

*. 8136. *The time of underne*] The Glossary explains this rightly to mean the third hour of the day, or nine of the clock. Inver. 8857, where this word is used again, the original has—*bora tertia* ; in this place it has—*bora prandii* ; from whence we may collect that in Chaucer's time the third hour, or underne, was the usual hour of dinner.—I have never met with

And all the paleis put was in array,
 Both halle and chambres, eche in his degree,
 Houses of office stuffed with plentee; 814
 Ther mayst thou see of deinteous vitaille
 That may be found as fer as lasteth Itaille.

This real markis richely arraide,
 Lordes and ladies in his compaignie,
 The which unto the feste weren praide, 815
 And of his retenue the bachelerie,
 With many a soun of sondry melodie,
 Unto the village of the which I told
 In this array the righte way they hold.

Grifilde of this (God wot) ful innocent 816
 That for hire shapen was all this array,
 To fetchen water at a welle is went,
 And cometh home as sone as ever she may;
 For wel she had herd say that thilke day
 The markis shulde wedde, and if she might 817
 She wolde fayn han seen som of that sight.

She thought I wol with other maidens flond,
 That ben my felawes, in our dore, and see
 The markisse, and therto wol I fond

any etymology of this word *underne*, but the following passage might lead one to suspect that it had some reference to *undernoon*. "In the town-book belonging to the corporation of St. *ford*, 28 E. IV. it is ordeyned that no person opyn ther *sa* " or set ther corn to sale, afore hour of ten of the bell, or " the *undernone* bell be rongyn." *Peck's Desid. Cur.* vol. i. 47. p. 36. In the *Island. Dict.* *ondverne* is rendered *Manc d*

come, as sone as it may be, 8160
 which that longeth unto me,
 may at leiser hire behold,
 ray unto the Castel hold.
 he wolde over the threswold gon
 s came and gan hire for to call, 8165
 : down hire water-pot anon
 threswold in an oxes stall,
 upon hire knecs she gan to fall,
 had countenance kneleth still,
 herd what was the lordes will. 8170
 ughtful markis spake unto this maid
 , and said in this manere ;
 ur fader, Grifildis ? he said.
 ith reverence in humble chere
 Lord, he is al redy here. 8175
 goth withouten lenger lette,
 markis she hire fader sette.
 ie hond than toke this poure man,
 hus whan he him had aside ;
 eithir may ne can 8180
 plesance of min herte hide ;
 i vouchesauf, what so betide,
 ter wol I take or that I wend
 wif unto hire lives end.
 rest me, that wot I wel certain, 8185
 r faithful liegeman ybore,
 t liketh me, I dare wel sain,

It liketh thee, and specially therfore
T'ell me that point that I have said before,
If that thou wolt unto this purpos drawe, 81
To taken me as for thy son in lawe?

This soden cas this man astoned so
That red he wex, abaiss, and al quaking
He stood; unnethes said he wordes mo
But only thus; Lord, quod he, my willing 82
Is as ye wol, ne ageins your liking
I wol no thing, min owen Lord so dere;
Right as you list governeth this matere.

Than wol I, quod this markis softely,
That in thy chambre I, and thou, and she, 83
Have a collation; and wost thou why?
For I wol ask hire if it hire wille be
To be my wif, and reule hire after me?
And all this shal be don in thy presence;
I wol not speke out of thin audience. 84

And in the chambre, while they were aboute
The tretce, which as ye shul after here,
The peple came into the hous withoute,
And wondred hem in how honest manere
Ententisly she kept hire fader dere: 85
But utterly Grisildis wonder might,
For never erst ne saw she swiche a sight.

No wonder is though that she be astoned
To see so gret a gest come in that place,
She never was to non swiche gesses woned, 86

For which she loked with ful pale face.
 But shortly forth this matere for to chace,
 Thise arn the wordes that the markis said
 To this benigne veray faithful maid.

Grifilde, he said, ye shuln wel understond 8220
 It liketh to your fader and to me
 That I you wedde, and eke it may so stond,
 As I suppose, ye wol that it so be:
 But thise demaundes aske I first (quod he)
 That fin it shal be don in hasty wise 8225
 Wol ye assent, or elles you avise?

I say this, be ye redy with good herte
 To all my lust, and that I freely may,
 As me best thinketh, do you laugh or smerte,
 And never ye to grutchen, night ne day, 8230
 And eke whan I say Ya-ye say not Nay,
 Neither by word ne frowning countenance?
 Swere this, and here I swere our alliance.

Wondring upon this thing, quaking for drede,
 She saide, Lord, indigne and unworthy 8235
 Am I to thilke honour that ye me bede,
 But as ye wol yourself right so wol I:
 And here I swere that never willingly
 In werk ne thought I n'ill you disobeie
 For to be ded, though me were loth to deie. 8240

This is ynough, Grifilde min, quod he.
 And forth he goth with a ful sobre chere
 Out at the dore, and after than came she,

And to the peple he said in this manere;
 This is my wif, quod he, that stondeth here; 8245
 Honoureth her, and loveth hire, I pray,
 Who so me loveth; ther n'is no more to say.

And for that nothing of hire olde gere
 She shulde bring into his hous, he bad
 That women shuld despoilen hire right there, 8250
 Of which thise ladies weren nothing glad
 To handle hire clothes wherin she was clad:
 But natheles this maiden bright of hew
 Fro foot to hed they clothed han all new.

Hire heres han they kempt, that lay untressed
 Ful rudely, and with hir fingres smal 8256
 A coroune on hire hed they han ydressed,
 And sette hire ful of nouches gret and smal.
 Of hire array what shuld I make a tale?
 Unneth the peple hire knew for hire fairnesse 8260
 Whan she transiewed was in swiche richesse.

This markis hath hire spoused with a ring
 Brought for the same cause, and than hire sette
 Upon an hors snow-white and wel ambling,
 And to his paleis, or he lenger lette, 8265
 (With joyful peple that hire lad and mette)

†. 8258. *ful of nouches*] The common reading is *nouches*, but I have retained the reading of the best mss. as it may possibly assist somehow to discover the meaning of the word. I observe too that it is so written in the inventory of the effects of H. V. *Rot. Parl.* 2. H. VI. n. 31; "Item 6 broches et *nouches* d'or garniz de divers garnades pois 31d d'or pris 35s.

Conveyed hire ; and thus the day they spende
In revel til the sonne gan descende.

And shortly forth this Tale for to chace,
I say that to this newe markissh
God hath swiche favour sent hire of his grace, 8270
That it ne semeth not by likeliness
That she was borne and fed in rudeness,
As in a cote or in an oxes stall,
But nourished in an emperoures hall. 8275

To every wight she waxen is so dere
And worshipful, that folk ther she was bore,
And fro hire birthe knew hire yere by yere,
Unnethes trowed they, but dorst han swore
That to Janicle, of which I spake before, 8280
She doughter n'as; for as by conjecture
Hem thoughte she was another creature.

For though that ever vertuous was she,
She was encreased in swiche excellence
Of thewes good, yset in high bountee, 8285
And so discrete, and faire of eloquence,
So benigne, and so digne of reverence,
And couds so the peples herte embrace,
That eche hire loveth that loketh on hire face.

Not only of Saluces in the toun 8290
Published was the bountee of hire name,
But eke beside in many a region ;
If on faith wel another faith the same :
So spredeth of hire hie bountee the fame,

That men and women, yong as wel as old, 8295
 Gon to Saluces upon hire to behold.

Thus Walter lowly, nay but really,
 Wedded with fortunat honestee,
 In Goddes pees liveth ful esily
 At home, and grace ynough outward had he: 8300
 And for he saw that under low degree
 Was honest vertue hid, the peple him held.
 A prudent man, and that is seen ful feld.

Not only this Grisildis thurgh hire wit
 Coude all the fete of wisly homlineffe, 8305
 But eke whan that the cas required it
 The comane profit coude she redresse:
 Ther n'as discord, rancour, ne hevinesse,
 In all the lond that she ne coude appese,
 And wisely bring hem all in hertes ese. 8310

'Though that hire husbond absent were or now
 If gentilmen or other of that contree
 Were wroth she wolde bringen hem at on.
 So wise and ripe wordes hadde she,
 And jugement of so grete equitee, 8315
 That she from heven sent was, as men wend,
 Peple to save, and every wrong to amend.

Not longe time after that this Grisilde
 Was wedded she a doughter hath ybore,
 All had hire lever han borne a knave childe: 8320
 Glad was the markis and his folk therfore,
For though a maiden childe come all before

knave child atteine,
a she n'is not barreine.

Pars tertia.

it befalleth times mo, 8325
childe had souked but a throwe,
his herte longed so
if, hire sadnesse for to knowe,
ht out of his herte throwe
as desir his wif to assay: 8330
not, he thought hire to affray.
ed hire ynough before,
ever good: what nedeth it
upt, and alway more and more?
en praise it for a subtil wit; 8335
I say that evil it fit
whan that it is no nede,
e in anguish and in drede.
his markis wrought in this manere:
ht alone ther as she lay 8340
e and with full trouble chere,
s, Grifilde, (quod he) that day
e out of your poure array,
a estat of high nobleffe,
forgetten, as I gesse; 8345
le, this present dignitee,
I have put you, as I trow,
ot forgetful for to be
e in poure estat ful low,
e mote yourselven know. 8350

Take hede of every word that I you say,
Ther is no wight that hereth it but we tway.

Ye wote yourself wel how that ye came here
Into this hous, it is not long ago,
And though to me ye be right lese and dere, 835
Unto my gentils ye be nothing so :
They say to hem it is gret shame and wo
For to be suggetes, and ben in servage
To thec, that borne art of a smal linage.

And namely sin thy doughter was ybore 836
Thise wordes han they spoken douteles ;
But I desire, as I have don before,
To live my lif with hem in rest and pees :
I may not in this cas be reccheles :
I mote do with thy doughter for the best, 837
Not as I wold, but as my gentils lest.

And yet, God wote, this is ful loth to me :
Eut natheles withouten youre wetting
I wol nought do ; but thus wol I (quod he)
That ye to me assenten in this thing ; 838
Shew now youre patience in youre werking
That ye me hight and swore in youre village
The day that maked was our mariage.

Whan she had herd all this she not ameved
Neyther in word, in there, ne countenance, 839
(For as it semed she was not agreved)
She sayde, Lord, all lith in your plesance ;
My child and I with hertely obeisance

Ben youres all, and ye may save or spill
Your owen thing: werketh after your will. 8380

Ther may no thing, so God my soule save,
Like unto you that may displese me;
Ne I desire nothing for to have,
Ne drede for to lese, sauf only ye:
This will is in myn herte, and ay shal be, 8385
No length of time or deth may this deface,
Ne change my corage to an other place.

Glad was this markis for hire answering,
But yet he feined as he were not so;
Al dreery was his chere and his loking, 8390
Whan that he shuld out of the chambre go.
Sone after this, a furlong way or two,
He prively hath told all his entent
Unto a man, and to his wif him sent.

A maner sergeant was this prive man, 8395
The which he faithful often founden had
In thinges gret, and eke swiche folk wel can
Don execution on thinges bad;
The lord knew wel that he him loved and drad.
And whan this sergeant wist his lordes will 8400
Into the chambre he stalked him ful still.

Madame, he sayd, ye mote foryeve it me
Though I do thing to which I am constrained;
Ye ben so wise, that right wel knowen ye
That lordes heites may not ben yfeined; 8405
They may wel be bewailed and complained,

THE CLEVER TALE.

But men mote nede to his lust obey,
And so wol't; ther n'is no more to say.

This child I am commended for to take;
And spake no more, but out the child he hent: 8410
Despitously, and gan a chere to make;
As though he wolde have slain it or he went.
Griffildis must al suffer and al consent;
And as a lambe she stode meke and still, 8415

And let this cruel fergeant do his will.
Suspectous was the distyne of this man,

Suspect his face, suspect his word also,
Suspect the tyme in which he this began:

Alas! hire daughter, that she loved so, 8420
She wende he wolde han slain it right tho;
But natheles she neither wept ne fiked,
Conforming hire to that the markis liked.

But at the last to spoken she began,
And mekely she to the fergeant praid

(So as he was a worthy gentilman)
That she might kisse hire child or that it deid;
And in hire barme this litel child she leid
With ful sad face; and gan the child to blisse, 8425
And lulled it, and after gan it kisse.

And thus she sayd in hire benigne vois;
Farewel, my child, I shal thee never see,
But sin I have thee marked with the crois,
Of thilke fader yblessed mote thou be
That for us died upon a crois of tre.

, litel child, Phim betake, 8435
 ghe shalt thou dien for my sake.
 hat to a worlde in this cas
 hard this routhe for to see;
 e a moder than han cried Alas!
 les so sad stedfast was she 8440
 ndured all adverstitee,
 e sergeant mekely she sayde,
 : agen your litel yonge mayde.
 ow (quod she) and doth my lordes heft:
 ng wold I pray you of your grace, 8445
 lord forbade you at the lest,
 is litel body in som place
 :s ne no briddes it to-race.
 word to that purpos wold say,
 he child, and went upon his way. 8450
 rgeant came unto his lord again,
 rifildes wordes and hire chere
 im point for point, in short and plain,
 presented with his doughter dere.
 this lord hath routhe in his manere, 8455
 :les his purpos held he still,
 don whan they wol have hir-will;
 ad this sergeant that he prively
 is child ful softe wind and wrappe,
 : circumstances tendrely, 8460
 y it in a cofre or in a lappe;
 peine his hed of for to swappe
 : III. E.

That no man shulde know of his entent,
 Ne whens he came ne whider that he went;
 But at Boloigne, unto his suster dere, 8465
 That thilke time of Pavie was Countesse,
 He shuld it take and shew hire this matere,
 Besoching hire to don hire besinesse
 This child to fostren in all gentillesse;
 And whos child that it was he bade hire hide 8470
 From every wight, for ought that may betide.
 This sergeant goth, and hath fulfild this thing.
 But to this marquis now retorne we;
 For now goth he ful fast imagining
 If by his wives chere he mighte see, 8475
 Or by hire wordes apperceive, that she
 Were changed; but he never coud hire finde
 But ever in on ylike sad and kinde.
 As glad, as humble, as besy in service
 And eke in love, as she was wont to be 8480
 Was she to him in every maner wise;
 Ne of hire doughter not a word spake she:
 Non accident for non adverstitee
 Was seen in hire, ne never hire doughters name
 Ne neveded she for ernest ne for game. 8485

v. 8466. of Pavie] When the text of this Tale was printed
 I had not sufficiently adverted to the reading of the best mss.
 which is uniformly *Pauik*. I have little doubt that it should be
Panik both here and below, ver. 8640, 8814. as in Petrarch the
Marquises sister is said to be married to the Count de Panico.
 In Boccace it is *de Panago*.

Fori quare.

In this estat ther passed ben foure yere
 Er she with child was, but as God wold
 A hewe childe she bare by this Walters
 Ful gracious, and fair for to behold;
 And whan that folk it to his fader told, 8490
 Not only he but all his countres mery
 Was for this childe, and God they thought and hery.

Whan it was two yere old, and from the brest
 Departed of his noice, on a day
 This markis caughte yet another left 8495
 To tempte his wif yet ofter, if he may.
 O! nedeles was she tempted in assay:
 But wedded men ne connen no mesure
 Whan that they finde a patient creature.

Wif, quod this markis, ye han herd of this 8500
 My peple likeli beren our mariage,
 And namely sin my sone yboren is
 Now is it werse than ever in al our age:
 The murmur sleth myn herte and my corage,
 For to myn eres cometh the vois so smerte 8505
 That it wel nis destroyed hath myn herte.

Now say they thus; Whan Walter is agon
 Than shal the blood of Janicle succede,
 And ben our lord, for other han we non.
 Swiche wordes sayn my peple, it is no drede: 8510
 Wel ought I of swiche murmur taken hede,

For certainly I drede al swiche sentence,
Though they not plainen in myn audiance.

I wolde live in pees if that I might ;
Wherfore I am disposed utterly, 8515
As I his suster served er by night,
Right so thinke I to serve him prively.
This warne I you, that ye not sodenly
Out of yourself for no wo shuld outraie ;
Beth patient, and therof I you praie. 8520

I have, quod she, sayd thus, and ever shal,
I wol no thing, ne n'ill no thing certain,
But as you list : not greveth me at al
Though that my doughter and my sone be slain
At your commandement ; that is to sain, 8525
I have not had no part of children twein
But first likenesse and after wo and peine.

Ye ben my lord, doth with your owen thing
Right as you list ; asketh no rede of me ;
For as I left at home al my clothing 8530
Whan I came first to you, right so (quod she)
Left I my will and al my libertee,
And toke your clothing ; wherfore I you prey
Doth your plesance, I wol youre lust obey.

And certes, if I hadde prescience 8535
Your will to know er ye your lust me told,
I wold it do withouten negligence :
But now I wote your lust, and what ye wold,
All your plesance ferme and stable I hold ;

THE CLERKS TALE.

125

my deth might do you ese 8540
 old I dien you to plesse.
 ot maken no comparisoun
 :. And whan this markis say
 of his wif, he cast adoun
 and wondreth how she may 8545
 fer al this array;
 yoth with drery contenance,
 e it was ful gret plesance.
 regant in the same wise
 oughter caughte, right so he 8550
 en can any werse devise)
 :sone, that ful was of beautee :
 : so patient was she
 ere made of hevinessse,
 ne, and after gan it bleffe. 8555
 : praied him, if that he might,
 he wold in erthe grave,
 mes, delicat to fight,
 fro bestes for to save.
 swer of him mighte have : 8560
 ay as him no thing ne tought,
 e he tendrely it brought.
 wondreth ever lenger the more
 ence; and if that he
 y knowen therbefore 8565
 ire children loved she,
 end that of som subtiltee

And of malice, or for cruel corage,
That she had suffred this with sad visage.

But wel he knew that next himself certain 8
She loved hire children best in every wise.

But now of women wold I asken sayn
If thisse affaies mighten not suffle?
What coud a sturdy husbond more devise
To prevē hire wifhood and hire stedfastnesse, 8
And he continuing ever in sturdinesse?

But ther ben folk of swiche condition,
That whan they han a certain purpos take
They cannot stint of hir entention,
But right as they were bounden to a stake 8
They wol not of hir firste purpos slake:
Right so this markis fully hath purposed
To tempt his wif as he was first disposed.

He waiteth if by word or contenance
That she to him was changed of corage; 8
But never coud he finden variance;
She was ay on in herte and in visage;
And ay the further that she was in age
The more trewe (if that it were possible)
She was to him in love, and more penible. 8

For which it semed thus, that of hem two
Ther was but o will; for as Walter left
The same lust was hire plesance also;
And, God be thanked, all fell for the best.
She shewed wel for no worldly unrest 8

A wif, as of hireself, no thing ne sholde
Wille in effect but as hire husbond wolde.

The sclandre of Walter wonder wide spradde,
That of a cruel herte he wikkedly,
For he a poure woman wedded hadde, 8600
Hath murdred both his children prively :
Swich murmur was among hem comunly.
No wonder is, for to the peples ere
Ther came no word but that they murdred were.

For which ther as his peple therbefore 8605
Had loved him wel, the sclandre of his diffame
Made hem that they him hateden therfore :
To ben a mudrour is an hateful name.
But natheles for earnest ne for game
He of his cruel purpos n'olde stente : 8610
To tempt his wif was sette all his entente.

Whan that his doughter twelf yere was of age
He to the court of Rome, in subtil wise
Enformed of his will, sent his message,
Commanding him swiche billes to devise 8615
As to his cruel purpos may suffise,
How that the Pope, as for his peples rest,
Bade him to wed another if him left.

I say he bade they shulden contrefete
The Popes bulles, making mention 8620

✧. 8614. *his message*] His messenger. See below, ver. 3823.
Message was commonly used for *messenger* by the French poets.
Du Cange, in v. *Messagarius*.

That he hath leve his firste wif to lete,
 As by the Pöpes dispensation
 To slinten rancour and dissention
 Betwix his peple and him. Thus spake the bull,
 The which they han published at the full. 862

The rude peple, as no wonder is,
 Wenden ful wel that it had ben right so;
 But whan thise tidings came to Grisildis
 I deme that hire herte was ful of wo;
 But she ylike sad for evermo 863
 Disposed was, this humble creature,
 The adversitee of fortune al to endure;

Abiding ever his lust and his plesance
 To whom that she was yeven herte and al,
 As to hire veray worldly suffisance. 864
 But shortly if this storie tell I shal,
 This markis writen hath in special
 A lettre, in which he sheweth his entente,
 And secretly he to Boloigne it sente

To the Erl of Pavie, which that hadde tho 865
 Wedded his suster, prayed he specially
 To bringen home agein his children two
 In honourable estat al openly;
 But o thing he him prayed utterly,
 That he to no wight, though men wold enquire,
 Shulde not tell whos children that they were, 866

But say the maiden shuld ywedded be
 Unto thy Markis of Saluces anon.

And as this erl was prayed so did he;
For at day sette he on his way is gon 8650
Toward Saluces, and lordes many on
In rich arraie, this maiden for to gide,
Hire yonge brother riding hire beside.

Arraied was toward hire mariage
This freshe maiden, ful of gemmes clere, 8655
Hire brother, which that seven yere was of age,
Arraied eke ful fresh in his manere:
And thus in gret nobleffe and with glad chere
Toward Saluces shaping hir journey
Fro day to day they riden in hir way. 8660

Pars quinta.

Among al his, after this wicked usage,
This markis yet his wif to tempten more
To the uttereste prefe of hire corage,
Fully to have experience and lore
If that she were as stedefast as before, 8665
He on a day in open audience
Ful boistoufly hath said hire this sentence:

Certes, Grifilde, I had ynough plesance
To han you to my wif for your goodnesse,
And for your trouthe and for your obeyfance, 8670
Not for your linage ne for your richeffe;
But now know I in veray sothfastnesse
That in gret lordship, if I me wel avise,
Ther is gret servitude in sondry wise.

I may not don as every ploughman may: 8675
 My peple me constreinet for to take
 Another wif, and crien day by day;
 And eke the Pope, rancour for to flake,
 Consenteth it, that dare I undertake:
 And trewely thus moche I wol you say, 8680
 My newe wif is comyng by the way.

Be strong of herte, and void anon hire place,
 And thilke dower that ye broughten me
 Take it agen; I grant it of my grace.
 Returneth to your sadres hous, (quod he) 8685
 No man may alway have prosperitee.
 With even herte I rede you to endure

— The stroke of Fortune or of aventure.

And she agen answerd in patience;

— My Lord, quod she, I wote and wist alway 8690

— How that betwixen your magnificence

— And my poverte no wight ne can ne may

— Maken commensuracioun; it is no pay:

That ye so longe of your benignitee
 Han holden me in honour and nobley,
 Wheras I was not worthy for to be, 8705
 That thanke I God and you, to whom I prey
 Foryeelde it you; ther is no more to sey.
 Unto my fader gladly wol I wende,
 And with him dwell unto my lives ende.

Ther I was fostred of a childe ful smal; 8710
 Til I be ded my lif ther wol I lede,
 A widew clene in body, herte, and al;
 For sith I yave to you my maidenhed,
 And am your trewe wif, it is no drede,
 God shilde swiche a lordes wif to take 8715
 Another man to husbond or to make.

And of your newe wif God of his grace
 So graunte you wele and prosperite,
 For I wol gladly yelden hire my place,
 In which that I was blisful wont to be : 8720
 For sith it liketh you, my Lord, (quod she)
 That whilom weren all myn hertes rest,
 That I shal gon, I wol go whan you lest.

But ther as ye me profre swiche dowaire
 As I first brought, it is wel in my mind 8725
 It were my wretched clothes, nothing faire,
 The which to me were hard now for to find.
 O goode God! how gentil and how kind
 Ye stemed by your speche and your visage
 The day that naked was oure marriage! 8730

But soth is said, algate I find it trewe,
 For in effect it preved is on me,
 Love is not old as whan that it is newe.
 But certes, Lord, for non adversitee
 To dien in this cas, it shal not be 8735
 That ever in word or werke I shal repent
 That I you yave min herte in hole entent.

My Lord, ye wote that in my fadres place
 Ye dide me stripe out of my poure wede,
 And richely ye clad me of your grace; 8740
 To you brought I nought elles out of drede
 But faith, and nakednesse, and maidenhede;
 And here agen your clothing I restore,
 And eke your wedding ring, for evermore.

The remenant of your jeweles redy be 8745
 Within your chambre, I dare it sassy fain.
 Naked out of my fadres hous (quod she)
 I came, and naked I mote turne again.
 All your plesance wolde I solwe fain;
 But yet I hope it be not your entent 8750
 That I smokles out of your paleis went.

Ye coude not do so dishonest a thing,
 That thilke wombe, in which your children lay,
 Shulde before the peple in my walking
 Be seen al bare; wherfore I you pray 8755
 Let me not like a worme go by the way:
 Remembre you, min owen Lord so dere,
 I was your wif, though I unworthy were.

Wherfore in guerdon of my maidenhede,
 Which that I brought and not agen I bere, 8760
 As vouchesauſ to yeve me to my mede
 But swiche a smok as I was wont to were,
 That I therwith may wrie the wombe of hire
 That was your wif. And here I take my leve
 Of you, min owen Lord, lest I you greve. 8765

The smok, quod he, that thou hast on thy bake
 Let it be still, and bere it forth with thee.
 But wel unnethes thilke word he spake,
 But went his way for routhe and for pitee.
 Before the folk hireſelven ſtripeth ſhe, 8770
 And in hire smok, with foot and hed al bare,
 Toward hire fadres hous forth is ſhe fare.

The folk hire folwen weping in hir wey,
 And Fortune ay they curſen as they gon;
 But ſhe fro weping kept hire eyen drey, 8775
 Ne in this time word ne ſpake ſhe non.
 Hire fader, that this tiding herd anon,
 Curſeth the day and time that Nature
 Shope him to ben a lives creature.

For out of doute this olde poure man 8780
 Was ever in ſuſpect of hire mariage;
 For ever he demed, ſin it firſt began,
 That whan the lord fulfilled had his corage
 Him wolde thinke it were a diſparage
 To his eſtat ſo lowe for to alight, 8785
 And voiden hire as ſoue as ever he might.

Agein his doughter hastily goth he,
 (For he by noife of folk knew hire coming)
 And with hire olde cote, as it might be,
 He covereth hire, ful forwefully weping; 8790
 But on hire body might he it not bring,
 For rude was the cloth, and more of age
 By daies fele than at hire mariage.

Thus with hire fader for a certain space
 Dwelleth this flour of wifly patience, 8795
 That nother by hire wordes ne hire face,
 Beforn the folk, ne eke in hir absence,
 Ne shewed she that hire was don offence,
 Ne of hire high estat no remembrance
 Ne hadde she as by hire contenance. 8800

No wonder is, for in hire gret estat
 Hire goft was ever in pleine humilitee;
 No tendre mouth, no herte delicat,
 No pompe, no semblant of realtee,
 But ful of patient benignitee, 8805
 Discrete, and prideles, ay honourable,
 And to hire husbond ever meke and stable.

Men speke of Job, and most for his humbleffe,
 As clerkes whan hem list can wel endite,
 Namely of men, but as in sothfastnesse, 8810
 Though clerkes preisen women but a lite,
 Ther can no man in humbleffe him acquite
 As woman can, ne can be half so trewe
 As women ben, but it be falle of newe.

Pars sexta.

Fro Boloigne is this Erl of Pavie come, 8815
 Of which the fame up sprang to more and leffe;
 And to the peples eres all and some
 Was couth eke that a newe markiseffe
 He with him brought in swiche pomp and richeffe,
 That never was ther seen with mñannes eye 8820
 So noble array in al West Lumbardie.

The markis, which that shope and knew all this,
 Er that this erl was come sent his message
 For thilke poure sely Grisildis,
 And she with humble herte and glad visage, 8825
 Not with no swollen thought in hire corage,
 Came at his heft, and on hire knees hire sette,
 And reverently and wisely she him grette.

Grisilde, (quod he) my will is utterly
 This maiden that shal wedded be to me 8830
 Received be to-morwe as really
 As it possible is in myn hous to be;
 And eke that every wight in his degree
 Have his estat in sitting and service,
 And high plesance, as I can best devise. 8835

I have no woman suffisant certain
 The chambres for to array in ordinance
 After my lust, and therfore wolde I fain
 That thin were all swiche manere governance;
 Thou knowest eke of old all my plesance: 8840
 Though thin array be bad, and evil besey,
 Do thou thy devoir at the leste wey.

Not only, Lord, that I am glad (quod she)
 To don your lust, but I desire also
 You for to serve and plesse in my degree 8845
 Withouten fainting, and shal evermo:
 Ne never for no wale ne for no wo
 Ne shal the goost within myn herte stente
 To love you best with all my trewe entente.

And with that word she gan the hous to dight,
 And tables for to sette, and beddes make, 8852
 And peined her to don all that she might,
 Praying the chambereres for Goddes sake
 To hasten hem, and faste swepe and shake;
 And she, the mooste serviceable of all, 8859
 Hath every chambre arraied and his hall.

Abouten undern gan this erl alight
 That with him brought thise noble children-twey,
 For which the peple ran to see the sight
 Of hir array, so richely besey; 8860
 And than at erl amonges hem they sey
 That Walter was no fool, though that him lest
 To change his wif, for it was for the best.

For she is fairer, as they demen all,
 Than is Grisilde, and more tendre of age, 8865
 And fairer fruit betwene hem shulde fall,
 And more plesant, for hire high linage:
 Hire brother eke so faire was of visage
 That hem to seen the peple hath caught plesance,
 Commending now the markis governance. 8870

O stormy peple, unsad and ever untrewē,
 And undiscrete and changing as a fane,
 Delighting ever in rombel that is newe,
 For like the mone waxen ye and wane :
 Ay ful of clapping, dere ynough a jane, 8875
 Your dome is fals, your constance evil preveth,
 A ful gret fool is he that on you leveh !

Thus saiden fadē folk in that citee
 Whan that the peple gased up and down,
 For they were glad right for the noveltee 8880
 To have a newe lady of hir toun.
 No more of this make I now mentioun,
 But to Grifilde agen I wol me dresse,
 And telle hire constance and hire besinesse.

Ful besy was Grifilde in every thing 8885
 That to the feste was appertinent;
 Right naught was she abaist of hire clothing,
 Though it were rude, and somdel eke to-rent,
 But with glad chere to the yate is went,
 With other folk, to grete the markifesse, 8890
 And after that doth forth hire besinesse.

With so glad chere his gestes she receiveth,
 And conningly everich in his degree,
 That no defaute no man apperceiveth.
 But ay they wondren what she mighte be 8895
 That in so poure array was for to see
 And coude swiche honour and reverence,
 And worthily they preisen hire prudence.

THE CLERKE'S TALE.

ostred in hire norishing
 drely, and to my supposing
 ghte not adersitee endure
 made a poure fostred creature.

And whan this Walter saw hire patience, 8920
 ire glade chere, and no malice at all,
 and he so often hadde hire don offence,

and she ay fader and constant as a wall,
 continuing ever hire innocence over all, 8925
 This sturdy markis gan his herte dresse

To rewe upon hire wisly stedfastnesse.
 This is ynough, Grisilde min, quod he,

Be now no more agast ne evil apaid,
 I have thy faith and thy benignitee, 8930

As wel as ever woman was, assaid
 In gret estat and pourelich arraid:

Now know I, dere wif, thy stedfastnesse;
 And hire in armes toke, and gan to kesse.

And she for wonder toke of it no kepe; 8935
 And she for wonder toke of it no kepe;

She herde not what thing he to hire said;
 She ferde as she had stert out of a slepe,

Til she out of hire masednesse abraid.
 Grisilde, quod he, by God that for us deid

Thou art my wif; non other I ne have
 Ne never had, as God my soule save. 8940

This is thy doughter which thou hast supposed
 To be my wif; that other faithfully
 Shal be min heir, as I have ay disposed;

Thou bare hem of thy body trewely;
 At Boloigne have I kept hem prively: 8945
 Take hem agen, for now maist thou not say
 That thou hast lorn non of thy children tway.

And folk that otherwise han said of me,
 I warne hem wel that I have don this dede
 For no malice ne for no crueltee, . 8950
 But for to assay in thee thy womanhede,
 And not to flee my children (God forbede)
 But for to kepe hem prively and still
 Til I thy purpos knew and all thy will.

Whan she this herd aswoune down she falleth 8955
 For pitous joye; and after hire swouning
 She both hire yonge children to hire calleth,
 And in hire armes, pitously weping,
 Embraceth hem, and tendrely kissing
 Ful like a moder, with hire salte teres 8960
 She bathed both hir visage and hir herea.

O, which a pitous thing it was to see
 Hire swouning, and hire humble vois to here!
Grand mercy! Lord, God thank it you (quod she)
 That ye han saved me my children dere: 8965
 Now rekke I never to be ded right here,
 Sin I stond in your love and in your grace,
 No force of deth, ne whan my spirit pace.

O tendre, o dere, o yonge, children mine!
 Your woful mother wened stedfastly. 8970
 That cruel houndes or som foul vermine

Had eten you; but God of his mercy
And your benigne fader tendrely
Hath don you kepe: and in that same stound
Al sodenly she swapt adoun to ground. 8975

And in hire swough so sadly holdeth she
Hire children two, whan she gan hem embrace,
That with gret sleight and gret difficultee
The children from hire arm they gan arrace.
O! many a tere on many a pitous face 8980
Doun ran of hem that stoden hire beside;
Unnethe abouten hire might they abide.

Walter hire gladeth, and hire forwe flaketh;
She riseth up abashed from hire trance,
And every wight hire joye and feste maketh 8985
Til she hath caught agen hire contenance.
Walter hire doth so faithfully plesance,
That it was deintee for to seen the chere
Betwix hem two fin they ben met in fere.

Thise ladies, whan that they hir time sey, 8990
Han taken hire, and into chambre gon,
And stripen hire out of hire rude arrey,
And in a cloth of gold that brighte shone,
With a coroune of many a riche stone
Upon hire hed, they into hall hire broughte, 8995
And ther she was honoured as hire ought.

Thus hath this pitous day a blisful end,
For every man and woman doth his might
This day in mirth and revel to dispend

Til on the welkin shone the sterres bright; 9000
 For more solempne in every maunes sight
 This feste was, and greter of costage,
 Than was the revel of hire mariage.

Ful many a yere in high prosperitee
 Liven thise two in concord and in rest, 9005
 And richely his doughter married he
 Unto a lord, on of the worthiest
 Of all Itaille, and than in pees and rest
 His wives fader in his court he kepeth
 Til that the soule out of his body crepeth. 9010

His sone succedeth in his heritage,
 In rest and pees, after his fadres day,
 And fortunat was eke in mariage,
 Al put he not his wif in gret assay:
 This world is not so strong, it is no nay, 9015
 As it hath ben in olde times yore,
 And herkneþ what this auctour saith therfore.

This story is said, not for that wives shuld
 Folwe Grifilde as in humilitee,
 For it were importable tho they wold, 9020
 But for that every wight in his degree
 Shulde be constant in adversitee
 As was Grifilde, therefore Petrark writeth
 This storie, which with high stile he enditeth.

For sith a woman was so patient 9025
 Unto a mortal man, wel more we ought
 Receiven all in gree that God us sent.

For gret skill is he preve that he wrought;
 But he ne tempteth no man that he bought,
 As faith Seint Jame, if ye his pistell rede; 9030
 He preveth folk al day, it is no drede;

And suffreth us, as for our exercise,
 With sharpe scourges of adversitee
 Ful often to be bete in sondry wise,
 Not for to know our will, for certes he 9035
 Or we were borne knew all our freeletee,
 And for our best is all his governance;
 Let us than live in vertuous suffrance.

But o word, Lordings, herkneth or I go:
 It were ful hard to finden now adayes 9040
 In all a toun. Grisildes three or two;
 For if that they were put to swiche assayes
 The gold of hem hath now so bad alayes
 With bras, that though the coine be faire at eye
 It wolde rather brast atwo than plie. 9045

For which here, for the Wives love of Bathe,
 Whos lif and al hire secte God maintene
 In high nraistrie, and elles were it scathe,
 I wol with lusty herte freshe and grene
 Say you a song to gladen you I wene, 9050
 And let us stint of earnestful matere.
 Herkneth my song, that faith in this manere:

Grisilde is ded, and eke hire patience,
 And both at ones buried in Itaille,
 For which I crie in open audience, 9055

...bond armed be in maille
thy crabbed eloquence
breft and eke his aventaille: 9080
de eke thou him binde,
t make him couche as doth a quaille.
aire, ther folk ben in presence
visage and thin aparaille;
be free of thy dispence; 9085
endes ay do thy travaille:
as light as lefe on linde,
are, and wepe, and wringe, and waille.

aille] The forepart of the armour, *sk.* He de-
int. But *aventaille* was the common name for
close helmet through which the wearer was
ot. in v.] so that perhaps *aventaille* meant ori-
with such an aperture; *un beaume à*
nd traill

No wedded man so hardy be to assaille
His wives patience, in trust to iind
Grifildes, for in certain he shal faille.

O noble wives! ful of high prudence,
Let non humilitee your tonges naile, 906
Ne let no clerk have cause or diligence
To write of you a storie of swiche mervaille
As of Grifildis, patient and kinde,
Lest Chichevache you swalwe in hire entraille.

Folwerth Ecco, that holdeth no silence, 907
But ever answereth at the countretaille:
Beth not bedaffed for your innocence,
But sharply taketh on you the governaille:
Emprenteth wel this lesson in your minde
For comun profit, sith it may availle. 90

Ye archewives! stondeth ay at defence,
Sin ye be strong as is a gret camaille,
Ne suffreth not that men do you offence.

¶ 9064. *Left Chichevache*] This excellent reading is rest upon the authority of the best mss. instead of the common *Chicheface*. The allusion is to the subject of an old ballad, v is still preserved in ms. *H.1.1.* 2231, fol. 270, b. It is a ki pageant, in which two beasts are introduced called *By* and *Chichevache*. The first is supposed to feed upon ob husbands, and the other upon patient wives; and the h of the piece consists in representing Bycorne as pamper a superfluity of food, and Chichevache as halt starved. Stowe's Catalogue of Lydgate's works, at the end of edit. of Chaucer, there is one entitled "Of two monstros" "*Bycorne and Chicheface*." It is not improbable that translated the ballad now extant from some older French which Chaucer alludes. The name of *Chichevache* *vaca parca*.

And sclendre wives, feble as in bataille,
 Beth egre as is a tigre yond in Inde; 9075
 Ay clappeth as a mill I you counfaille.

Ne drede hem not, doth hem no reverence,
 For though thin husbond armed be in maille
 The arwes of thy crabbed eloquence
 Shal perce his brest and eke his aventaille: 9080
 In jalousie I rede eke thou him binde,
 And thou shalt make him couche as doth a quaille.

If thou be faire, ther folk ben in presence
 Shew thou thy visage and thin aparaille;
 If thou be soule be free of thy dispenche; 9085
 To get thee frendes ay do thy travaille:
 Be ay of chere as light as lefe on linde,
 And let him care, and wepe, and wringe, and waille.

†. 9080. *aventaille*] The forepart of the armour, *sk.* He deduces it from *avant*. But *ventaille* was the common name for that aperture in a close helmet through which the wearer was to breathe, [*Nicot. in v.*] so that perhaps *aventaille* meant originally an helmet with such an aperture; *un heaume à ventaille*.

†. 9088. *and wringe, and waille*] Beside the mss. C. 1. *Ask.* 1, 2, and others, we have the authority of both Caxton's editt. for concluding The Clerk's Tale in this manner. I say nothing of the two editt. by Pynson, as they are mere copies of Caxton's second: but I must not conceal a circumstance which seems to contradict the supposition that The Marchant's Prologue followed immediately. In those same mss. the following stanza is interposed;

This worthy Clerk, whan ended was his Tale,
 Oure Hoste saide and swore by cokkes bones,
 Me were lever than a barrel of ale
 My wif at home had herd this legend ones:
 This is a gentil Tale for the nones,
 As to my purpos, wile ye my wille;
 But thing that wol not be let it be fille.

a long and a large difference
 rifildes grete patience 9100
 y wife the passing crueltee.
 bounden, all so mote I the,
 ever eft comen in the snare.
 and men live in sorwe and care:
 ho so wol, and he shal finde 9105
 soth, by Seint Thomas of Inde,
 more part, I say not alle;
 that it shulde so befallē.
 | Sire Hoste, I have ywedded be
 ethes two, and more not parde; 9110
 trowe that he that all his lif
 h ben, though that men wolde him rife
 erte, ne coude in no manere
 much sorwe as I you here
 n of my wives cursednesse. 9115
 od our Hoste, Marchant, so God you bleffe,
 iochel knowen of that art
 y I pray you tell us part.
 quod he, but of min owen fore,
 erte I tellen may no more. 9120

E MERCHANTES TALE.

ther was dwelling in Lumbardie
 knight, that born was at Pavie,

antes Tale] Old January marrieth young May, and
 ial match receiveth a foul reward. *Urry.*

In which he lived in gret prosperitee;
 And sixty yere a wifes man was he,
 And folwed ay his bodily delit 9125
 On women ther as was his appetit,
 As don thise fooles that ben seculere.
 And whan that he was passed sixty yere,
 Were it for holinesse or for dotage
 I cannot fain, but swiche a gret corage 9130
 Hadde this knight to ben a wedded man,
 That day and night he doth all that he can
 To espieu wher that he might wedded be,
 Praying our Lord to granten him that he
 Mighte ones knowen of that blisful lif 9135
 That is betwix an husbond and his wif,
 And for to live under that holy bond
 With which God firste man and woman bond.
 Non other lif (said he) is worth a bene;
 For wedlok is so esy and so clene 9140
 That in this world it is a paradise.
 Thus saith this olde knight that was so wise.
 And certainly, as soth as God is king,
 To take a wif it is a glorious thing,
 And namely whan a man is old and hore, 9145
 Than is a wif the fruit of his trefore;
 Than shuld he take a yong wif and a faire,
 On which he might engendren him an heire,
 And lede his lif in joye and in solas,
 Wheras thise bachelers singen alas! 9150

Whan that they finde any aduersitee
 In love, which n'is but childish vanitee.
 And trewely it sit wel to be so
 That bachelers have often peine and wo :
 On brotel ground they bilde, and brotelnesse 9155
 They finden whan they wenen sikernesse :
 They live but as a bird or as a beste,
 In libertee and under non areste,
 Ther as a wedded man in his estat
 Liveth a lif blisful and ordinat, 9160
 Under the yoke of mariage ybound ;
 Wel may his herte in joye and blisse abound :
 For who can be so buxom as a wif ?
 Who is so trewe and eke so ententif
 To kepe him, fike and hole, as is his make ? 9165
 For wele or wo she n'ill him not forsake ;
 She n'is not wery him to love and serve
 Though that he lie bedrede til that he sterve.
 And yet som clerkes sain it is not so,
 Of which he Theophrast is on of tho. 9170
 What force though Theophrast list for to lie ?
 Ne take no wif, quod he, for husbondrie,

9172. *Ne take no wif*] What follows, to ver. 9180 incl. is taken from the *Liber aureolus Theophrasti de nuptiis*, as quoted by Hieronymus *contra Jovinianum*, and from thence by John of Salisbury, *Polycrat.* l. viii. c. xi. ; " Quod si propter dispensationem domus, et languoris solatia, et fugam solitudinis, ducuntur uxores, multo melius dispensat servus fidelis, &c. Affidere autem ægrotanti magis possunt amici et vernulæ

As for to spare in household thy dispence :
 A trewe servant doth more diligence
 Thy good to kepe than doth thin owen wif, 9175
 For she wol claimen half part al hire lif.
 And if that thou be fike, so God me save,
 Thy veray frendes or a trewe knave
 Wol kepe thee bet than she, that waiteth ay
 After thy good, and hath don many a day. 9180
 This sentence, and an hundred thinges werse,
 Writeth this man, ther God his bones curse.
 But take no kepe of al swiche vanitee ;
 Desieth Theophrast, and herkeneth me.

"beneficiis obligati quam illa, quæ nobis imputet lacrymas
 tuas," &c.

¶ 9180. *many a day*] After this verse, in the common editt.
 are these two ;

And if thou take to thee a wif untrew
 Full oftentime it shall thee sore rew.

In mss. *A. C.* and *B. α.* they stand thus—

And if thou take a wif be wel ywar
 Of on peril whiche I declare ne dar.
 thing

In mss. *C. 1*, *H. A. D.* thus—

And if thou take a wif of heye lynage
 She shal be hauteys and of gret cofage.

In ms. *B. δ.* thus —

And if thou take a wif in thin age olde
 Ful lightly may it thou be a cokewold.

In mss. *A. B.* 1, 2, *E. H. B. θ. N. c.* and both Caxton's editt. they
 are entirely omitted, and so I believe they should be. If any
 one of those couplets should be allowed to be from the hand
 of Chaucer, it can only be considered as the opening of a new
 argument, which the Author for some reason or other imme-
 diately abandoned, and consequently would have cancelled if
 he had lived to publish his Work.

A wif is Goddes yefte veraily; 9185
 All other maner yeftes hardely,
 As landes, rentes, paffare, or commune,
 Or mebles, all ben yeftes of Fortune,
 That paffen as a shadow on the wall :
 But drede thou not if plainly speke I fhall; 9190
 A wif wol laft and in thin hous endure
 Wel lenger than thee lift paraventure.

Mariage is a ful gret sacrament ;
 He which that hath no wif I hold him fhent ;
 He liveth helples and all defolat : 9195
 (I speke of folk in feculer estat)
 And herkneth why, I fay not this for nought,
 That woman is for mannes helpe ywrought :
 The highe God, whan he had Adam maked,
 And faw him al alone belly naked, 9200
 God of his grete goodneffe faide than,
 Let us now make an helpe unto this man
 Like to himfelf, and than he made him Eve.

Here may ye fee, and hereby may ye preve,
 That a wif is mannes helpe and his comfort, 9205
 His paradis terreftre, and his difport :
 So buxom and fo vertuous is ſhe,
 They moften nedes live in unitee :
 O fleſh they ben, and o fleſh, as I geſſe,
 Hath but on herte in wele and in diftreſſe. 9210
 . A wif ? a ! Seinte Marie, *benedicite* !
 How might a man have any adverſite

THE MARCHANTES TALE.

h a wif? certes I cannot feye.
 e the which that is betwix hem tweye
 y no tonge telle or herte thinke. 9215
 oure ſhe helpeth him to ſwinke;
 th his good, and waſteth never a del;
 hire huſbond doth hire liketh wel:
 not ones Nay whan he ſaith Ye:
 ſaith he; Al redy, Sire, ſaith ſhe. 9220
 ful ordre, o wedlok precious!
 ſo mery and eke ſo vertuous,
 ommended and approved eke,
 ry man that holt him worth a leke
 bare knees ought all his lif 9225
 his God that him hath ſent a wif,
 pray to God him for to ſend
 laſt unto his lives end;
 his lif is fet in ſikernesse,
 not be deceived, as I geſſe, 9230
 e werche after his wives rede;
 y he boldly beren up his hede;
 ſo trewe, and therwithal ſo wiſe;
 h, if thou wilt werchen as the wiſe,
 ſo as women wol thee rede. 9235
 w that Jacob, as thiſe clerkes rede,
 conſeil of his mother Rebekke
 he kiddes ſkin about his nekke,

Le how that Jacob] The ſame inſtances are quoted

He fostreth it, and therefore bid I thee
 Cherish thy wif, or thou shalt never the.
 Husband and wif, what so men jape or play,
 Of worldly folk holden the siker way :
 They ben so knit ther may non harm betide, 9265
 And namely upon the wives side.

For which this January, of whom I told,
 Considered hath within his dayes old
 The lusty lif, the vertuous quite,
 That is in mariage honey-swete, 9270
 And for his frendes on a day he sent
 To tellen hem th' effect of his entent.

With face sad his tale he hath hem told :
 He sayde, Frendes, I am hore and old,
 And almost (God wot) on my pittes brinke, 9275
 Upon my soule somewhat most I thinke.
 I have my body folily dispended,
 Blessed be God that it shal ben amended !
 For I wol ben certain a wedded man,
 And that anon in all the hast I can. 9280
 Unto som maiden, faire and tendre of age,
 I pray you shapeth for my mariage
 All sodenly, for I wol not abide ;
 And I wol sonde to espien on my side
 To whom I may be wedded hastily. 9285
 But for as moche as ye ben more than I

tainly wrong. I have printed, from conjecture only—*love thou
 thy wif*. But upon reconsidering the passage I think it may be
 brought still nearer to the apostle's doctrine by writing—*Thou
 lovett thyself if thou lovett thy wif*.

Ye shullen rather swiche a thing espien
Than I, and wher me beste were to allien.

But o thing warn I you, my frendes dere,
I wol non old wif han in no manere ; 9290

She shal not passen twenty yere certain :
Old fish and yonge flesh wold I have fain.

Bet is (quod he) a pike than a pikerel,
And bet than old beef is the tendre veel.

I wol no woman thirty yere of age ; 9295
It is but benestraw and gret forage.

And eke thise olde widewes (God it wote)
They connen so moch craft on Wades bote,
So mochel broken harm whan that hem lest,
That with hem shuld I never live in rest. 9300

For sondry scoles maken subtil clerkes ;
Woman of many scoles half a clerk is.

But certainly a yong thing men may gie,
Right as men may warm wax with handes plie ;

✧. 9298. *Wades bote*] Upon this Mr. Speght remarks as follows ; “ Concerning *Wade* and his *bote*, called Guingelot, as “ also his straunge exploits in the same, because the matter is “ long and fabulous I passe it over.”——*Tantumne rem tam negligenter* ? Mr. Speght probably did not foresee that posterity would be as much obliged to him for a little of this fabulous matter concerning *Wade* and his *bote* as for the gravest of his annotations. The story of *Wade* is mentioned again by our Author in his *Troilus*, iii. 615 ;

He songe, the playde, he tolde a tale of *Wade*.
It is there put proverbially for any romantick history ; but the allusion in the present passage to *Wades bote* can hardly be explained without a more particular knowledge of his adventures than we are now likely ever to attain.

THE MERCHANTES TALE.

9305

Therefore I say you plainly in a claufe
I wol non old wif han right for this caufe.
For if fo were I hadde fwich mefchance,
That I in hire ne coude have no plesance,
Than shuld I lede my lif in avoutrie,
And fo freight to the devil when I die.
Ne children shuld I non upon hire geten;
Yet were me lever boundes had me eten
Than that min heritage shulde fall
In ftraunge hondes; and this I tell you all.
I dote not, I wot the caufe why
Men shulden wedde; and furthermore wot I
Ther fpeketh many a man of mariage
That wot no more of it than wot my page
For which causes a man shuld take a wif.
If he ne may not liven chaft his lif,
Take him a wif with gret devotion,
Because of leful procreation
Of children, to the honour of God above,
And not only for paramour or love,
And for they shulden lecherie echue,
And yeld hir dette when that it is due,
Or for that eche of hem shuld helpen other
In mefchefe, as a fuller shal the brother,
And live in chaftitee ful holly.
But, Sires, (by your leve) that am not I,
For, God be thanked, I dare make avaunt
I fele my limmes flark and fuffisant

9310

9315

9320

9

all that a man belongeth to :
 myselven best what I may do.
 ough I be hoor I fare as doth a tre 9335
 t blosmeth er the fruit ywoxen be ;
 blofmy tre n'is neither drie ne ded :
 ele me no wher hoor but on my hed :
 Min herte and all my limmes ben as grene
 As laurer thurgh the yere is for to senie. 9340
 And sin that ye han herd all min entent
 I pray you to my will ye wolde assent.
 Diverse men diversely him told
 Of mariage many ensamples old ;
 Som blamed it, som praised it certain : 9345
 But atte laste, shortly for to sain,
 (As all day falleth altercation
 Betwixen frendes in disputifon)
 Ther fell a strif betwix his brethren two,
 Of which that on was cleped Placebo, 9350
 Justinus sothly called was that other.
 Placebo sayd, O January ! brother,
 Ful litel nede han ye, my lord so dere,
 Confeil to aske of any that is here,
 But that ye ben so ful of sapience 9355
 That you ne liketh for your high prudence

v. 9348. *disputifon*.] Disputation ; so ver. 11202, 15244. See
Gower, Conf. Amant. fol 15 b. ;

In great *despute*son they were.
 and fol. 150, b. 151, b.

Volume III.

O

To weiven fro the word of Salomon;
'This word sayd he unto us everich on,
Werke alle thing by conseil, thus sayd he,
And than ne shalt thou not repenten thee. 9360
But though that Salomon spake swiche a word,
Min owen dere brother and my lord,
So wisly God my soule bringe at rest,
I hold your owen conseil is the best.

For, brother min, take of me this motif, 9365
I have now ben a court-man all my lif,
And God it wot, though I unworthy be,
I have stonden in ful gret degree
Abouten lordes of ful high estat,
Yet had I never with non of hem debat; 9370
I never hem contraried trewely.

I wot wel that my lord can more than I;
What that he saith I holde it firme and stable;
I say the same, or elles thing semblable.
A ful gret fool is any conseillour, 9375
That serveth any lord of high honour,
That dare presume, or ones thinken it,
That his conseil shuld passe his lordes wit:
Nay, lordes be no fooles by my fay.
Ye han yourselven shewed here to-day 9380
So high sentence, so holiy, and wel,
That I consent, and confirme every del
Your wordes all, and your opinicun.
By God ther n'is no man in all this toun,

THE MARCHANTES TALE. 139

coud bet han ysayd : 9385

1 of this conseil wel appaid.

it is an high corage

hat stopen is in age

ing wif : by my fader kin

ongeth on a joly pin. 9390

in this matere right as yon lest,

old it for the best.

at ay stille fat and herd,

wife he to Placebo answerd :

: min, be patient I pray, 9395

d, and herkneth what I say.

ong his other wordes wise,

an ought him right wel avise

yeveth his lond or his catel :

ght avisen me right wel 9400

eve my good away fro me,

ught avisen me, parde,

eve my body ; for alway

vel it is no childes play

without avisement. 9405

pueren (this is min assent)

a wife and sobre or dronkelewe,

elles other waies a shrew,

r a wastour of thy good,

ure, or elles a man is wood : 9410

[*defer*] So m^f. *A*. See the note on ver. 2019.

[*in is wood*] In m^f. *A*. *mannishewed* ; in C. 1,

Al be it so that no man finden shal
Non in this world that trottest hol in al,
Ne man ne beste, swiche as men can devise,
But natheles it ought ynough salfice
With any wif, if so were that she had 9
Mo goode thewes than hire vices bad :
And all this axeth leiser to enquire;
For God it wot I have wept many a tere
Ful prively sin that I had a wif.
Praise who so wel a wedded mannes lif, 9
Certain I find in it but cost and care,
And observances of alle blisses bare;
And yet, God wot, my neighenours aboute,
And namely of women many a route,
Sain that I have the moste stedfast wif, 9
And eke the mekest on, that bereth lif :
But I wot best wher wringeth me my sho.
Ye may for me right as you liketh do.
Avisech you, ye ben a man of age,
How that ye entren into mariage, 9
And namely with a yong wif and a faire.
By him that made water, fire, erthe, and airc,
The yongest man that is in all this route
Is besy ynow to bringen it aboute
To han his wif alone, trusteth me : 9
Ye shul not plesen hire fully yeres three,
This is to sain, to don hire ful plesance :
A wif axeth ful many an observance.

I pray you that ye be not evil appaid.

Wel, quod this January, and hast thou saide? 9440

Straw for Senek, and straw for thy proverbes;

I counte not a panier ful of herbes

Of scole termes : wiser men than thou,

As thou hast herd, assented here right now

To my purpos. Placebo, what saye ye? 9445

I say it is a cursed man, quod he,

That letteth matrimoine sickerly.

And with that word they risen sodenly,

And ben assented fully that he sholde

Be wedded whan him list and wher he wolde. 9450

High fantasie and curious besineffe

Fro day to day gan in the soule empressse

Of January about his mariage :

Many a faire shap and many a faire visage

Ther passeth thurgh his herte night by night. 9455

As who so toke a mirrour polished bright,

And set it in a comune market place,

Then shuld he see many a figure pace

By his mirrour, and in the same wise

Gan January in with his thought devise 9460

Of maidens which that dwelten him beside ;

He wiste not wher that he might abide ;

For if that on have beantee in hire face,

Another stont so in the peples grace,

For hire sadnesse and hire benignitee, 9465

That of the peple the gretest vois hath she :

And som were riche and hadden a bad name;
 But natheles, betwix earnest and game,
 He at the last appointed him on on,
 And let all other from his herte gon, 947
 And chees hire of his owen auctoritee,
 For love is blind all day and may not see.
 And whan that he was in his bed ybrought
 He purtreied in his herte and in his thought
 Hire freshe beautee and hire age tendre, 947
 Hire middel smal, hire armes long and sclendre,
 Hire wise governance, hire gentilleffe,
 Hire womanly bering, and hire sadnesse.

And whan that he on hire was condescended
 Him thought his chois it might not ben amended;
 For whan that he himself concluded had 948
 Him thought eche other mannes wit so bad
 That impossible it were to replie
 Again his chois: this was his fantasie.

His frendes sent he to, at his instance, 948
 And praied hem to don him that plesance
 That hastily they wolden to him come;
 He wolde abregge hir labour all and some:
 Neded no more to hem to go ne ride,
 He was appointed ther he wolde abide. 949

Placebo came, and eke his frendes sone,
 And alderfirst he bade hem all a bone,
 That non of hem non argumentes make
 Again the purpos that he hath ytake;

Which purpos was plesant to God (said he) 9495
And veray ground of his prosperitee.

He said ther was a maiden in the toun
Which that of beautee hadde gret renoun,
Al were it so she were of smal degree;
Sufficeth him hire youth and hire beautee; 9500
Which maid (he said) he wold han to his wif,
To lede in ese and holinesse his life;
And thanked God that he might han hire all,
That no wight with his blisse parten shall;
And praied hem to labour in this nede, 9505
And shapen that he faille not to spede:
For than, he sayd, his spirit was at ese;
Than is (quod he) nothing may me displese,
Save o thing pricketh in my conscience,
The which I wol reherse in your presence. 9510

I have (quod he) herd said ful yore ago
Ther may no man han parfite blisses two,
This is to say, in erthe and eke in heven;
For though he kepe him fro the sinnes seven,
And eke from every branch of thilke tree, 9515
Yet is ther so parfit felicitee,
And so gret ese and lust, in mariage,
That ever I am agast, now in min age,
That I shal leden now so mery a lif,
So delicat, withouten wo or strif, 9520
That I shal han min heven in erthe here;
For sin that veray heven is bought so dere,

With tribulation and gret penance,
How shuld I than, living in swiche plesance
As alle wedded men don with hir wives, 951
Come to the blisse ther Crist eterne on live is?
This is my drede, and ye, my brethren tweie,
Assoileth me this question I preie.

Justinus, which that hated his folie,
Answerd anon right in his japerie, 952
And for he wold his longe tale abrege
He wolde non auctoritee allege,
But sayde, Sire, so ther be non obstacle
Other than this, God of his hie miracle,
And of his mercy, may so for you werche, 953
That er ye have your rights of holy cherche
Ye may repent of wedded mannes lif,
In which ye sain ther is no wo ne strif;
And elles God forbode but if he sent
A wedded man his grace him to repent 954
Wel often, rather than a single man:
And therefore, Sire, the best rede that I can,
Despeire you not, but haveth in memorie
Paraventure she may be your Purgatorie;
She may be Goddes mene and Goddes whippe, 954
'Than shal your soule up unto heaven skippe
Swifter than doth an arow of a bow.
I hope to God hereafter ye shal know
That ther n'is non so gret felicitee
In mariage, ne never more shall be, 955

That you shal let of your salvation,
 So that ye use, as skill is and reson,
 The lustes of your wif attemprely,
 And that ye plesse hire nat to amorously,
 And that ye kepe you eke from other sinne. 9555
 My Tale is don, for my wit is but thinne.
 Beth not agast hereof, my brother dere,
 But let us waden out of this matere.

The Wif of Bathe, if ye han understond,
 Of mariage, which ye now han in hond, 9560
 Declared hath ful wel in litel space.
 Fareth now wel, God have you in his grace!

And with this word this Justine and his brother
 Han take hir leve, and eche of hem of other.
 And whan they saw that it must nedes be, 9565
 They wroughten so by sleighte and wise trettee
 That she this maiden, which that Maius hight,
 As hastily as ever that she might,
 Shal wedded be unto this January.

I trow it were to longe you to tary 9570
 If I you told of every script and bond
 By which that she was feoffed in his lond,
 Or for to rekken of hire rich array.
 But, finally, ycomen is the day
 That to the chirche bothe ben they went 9575
 For to receive the holy sacrament.
 Forth cometh the preest, with stole about his nekke,
 And bade hire be like Sara and Rebekke

In wifdome and in trouthe of mariage;
 And fayd his orifons, as is ufage, 9580
 And crouched hem, and bade God ſhuld hem bleſſe,
 And made all fiker ynow with holineſſe.

Thus ben they wedded with ſolempnitee;
 And at the feſte fitteth he and ſhe,
 With other worthy folk, upon the deis. 9585
 Al ful of joye and bliſſe is the paleis,
 And ful of instruments, and of vitaille
 The moſte deinteous of all Itaille.

Beſorn hem ſtood ſwiche instruments of ſoun
 That Orpheus, ne of Thebes Amphion, 9590
 Ne maden never ſwiche a melodie:
 At every cours in came loude minſtralcie,
 That never Joab tromped for to here,
 Ne he Theodomas yet half ſo clere
 At Thebes whan the citee was in doute. 9595
 Bacchus the win hem ſkinketh all aboute,
 And Venus laugheth upon every wight,
 (For January was become hire knight,
 And wolde both affaien his corage
 In libertee and eke in mariage) 9600

✱. 9594. *Ne be Theodomas*] This perſon is mentioned again as a famous trumpeter in the *H. of F.* iii. 156, but upon what authority I really do not know. I ſhould ſuſpect that our Author met with him and the anecdote alluded to in ſome romantick hiſtory of Thebes.----*He* is prefixed to proper names emphatically, according to the Saxon uſage. See before, ver. 9242, *bim* Holofernes; ver. 9247, *bim* Mardochee; and below, ver. 9608;

of *Li.* Philologie and *bim* Mercurie.

And with hire firebrond in hire hond aboute
 Danceth before the bride and all the route.
 And certainly I dare right wel say this,
 Ymeneus, that god of Wedding is,
 Saw never his lif so mery a wedded man. 9605

Hold thou thy pees, thou poet Marcian,
 That writest us that ilke wedding mery
 Of hire Philologie and him Mercurie,
 And of the songes that the Muses songe;
 To smal is both thy pen and eke thy tonge 9610
 For to descriven of this mariage.

Whan tendre Youth hath wedded stouping Age
 Ther is swiche mirth that it may not be writen:
 Affaieth it yourself, than may ye witen
 If that I lie or non in this matere. 9615

Maius, that fit with so benigne a chere,
 Hire to behold it semed Faerie.
 Quene Hester loked never with swiche an eye
 On Assuere, so meke a look hath she.
 I may you not devise all hire beautee; 9620
 But this moch of hire beautee tell I may,
 That she was, like the brighte morwe of May,
 Fulfilled of all beautee and plesance.

This January is ravished in a trance
 At every time he loketh in hire face; 9625
 But in his herte he gan hire to manace
 That he that night in armes wold hire streine
 Harder than ever Paris did Heleine.

But natheles yet had he gret pitee
 That thilke night offenden hire must he, 96
 And thought, alas! o tendre creature!
 Now wolde God ye mighten wel endure
 All my corage; it is so sharpe and kene
 I am agast ye shal it nat sustene!
 But God forbode that I did all my might! 96
 Now wolde God that it were waxen night,
 And that the night wold lasten ever mo!
 I wold that all this peple were ago!
 And, finally, he doth all his labour,
 As he best mighte, saving his honour, 96
 To heste hem fro the mete in subtil wise.

The time came that reson was to rise,
 And after that men dance and drinken fast,
 And spices all about the hous they cast,
 And ful of joye and blisse is every man, 96
 All but a squier that highte Damian,
 Which carf befor the knight ful many a day:
 He was so ravisht on his Lady May,
 That for the veray peine he was nie wood;
 Almost he swelt, and swouned ther he flood: 96
 So fore hath Venus hurt him with hire brond
 As that she bare it dancing in hire hond;

v. 9652. *As that she bare it*] As this line is not only in the best mss. but also in edit. Ca. 2, it seems very extraordinary that the later editions should have exchanged it for following;

So fresh she was, and thereto so licand.

And to his bed he went him hastily :
 No more of him as at this time speke I,
 But ther I let him wepe ynow and plaine 9655
 Til freshe May wol rewen on his peine.

O perilous fire that in the bedstrow bredeth !
 O famuler so that his service bedeth !
 O servant traitour, false of holy hewe,
 Like to the nedder in bosom slie untrewe, 9660
 God shelde us alle from your acquaintance !
 O January ! dronken in plesance
 Of mariage, sec how thy Damian,
 Thin owen squier and thy boren man,
 Entendeth for to do thee vilanie 9665
 God grante thee thin homly so to espie,
 For in this world n'is werse pestilence
 Than homly so all day in thy presence.

Parformed hath the sonne his arke diurne,
 No longer may the body of him sojourne 9670
 On the orifont, as in that latitude;
 Night, with his mantel that is derke and rude,
 Gan oversprede the hemispheric aboute,
 For which departed is this lusty route

✧. 9658. *his service bedeth*] Proffereth; so this word is explained in another passage, ver. 16533;

Lo how this these coude *his service bede* !
 Ful soth it is that *swiche profered service*
 Stinketh, as witnesen thise olde wise.

See also ver. 8236.

✧. 9659. *false of holy beue*] I have added *of* from conjecture.
 See below, ver. 12355, under hewe *of* holinesse.

Fro January, with thank on every side. 967j
 Home to hir houses lustily they ride,
 Ther as they don hir thinges as hem lef,
 And whan they saw hir time gon to rest.

Sone after that this hastif January.
 Wol go to bed, he wol no longer tary. 968o
 He drinketh Ipocras, clarre, and Vernage,
 Of spices hot, to encrefen his corage;
 And many a letuargie had he ful fine,
 Swiche as the cursed monk Dan Constantine
 Hath written in his book *De Coitu*; 968j
 To ete hem all he wolde nothing eschue:
 And to his priuee frendes thus sayd he:

For Goddes love, as sone as it may be,

ψ. 9681. *Vernage*] *Fernaccia*, Ital. "Credo sic dictum (says "Skinner) quali *Feronaccia*, ab agro *Veronensi*, in quo optimum ex hoc genere vinum crescit." But the *Fernage* (whatever may have been the reason of its name) was probably a wine of Crete, or of the neighbouring continent. *Froissart*, v. iv. c. 18; "De l'isle de Candie il leur venoit tresbonnes *Malvoisies* et grenaches [r. *gernaches*] dont ils estoient largement servis et confortez." Our Author in another place, ver. 13000, 1, joins together the wines of Malvesie and *Vernage*. *Malvasia* was a town upon the eastern coast of the Morea, near the site of the ancient *Epidauros Limera*, within a small distance from Crete.

ψ. 9684. *Dan Constantine*] *Dan* (a corruption of *Dominus*) was a title of honour usually given to monks, as *Dom* and *Don* still are in France and Spain. See below ver. 13935;

Whether shal I call you my Lord *Dan* John,
 Or *Dan* Thomas, or elles *Dan* Albion?

Dan Constantine, according to *Fabric. Bibl. Med. Æt.* t. i. p. 423, wrote about the year 1080. His works, including the treatise mentioned in the text, were printed at Lulil 1536, fol.

Let voiden all this hous in curteis wife.
 And they han don right as he wol devise. 9690
 Men drinken, and the travers drawe anon;
 The bride is brought a-bed as still as ston;
 And whan the bed was with the preest yblessed
 Out of the chambre hath every wight him dressed,
 And January hath fast in armes take 9695
 His freshe May, his paradis, his make.
 He lulleth hire, he kisseth hire ful oft;
 With thicke bristles of his berd unsoft,
 Like to the skin of houndfish, sharp as brere,
 (For he was shave al newe in his manere) 9700
 He rubbeth hire upon hire tendre face,
 And sayde thus; Alas! I mote trespace
 To you my spouse, and you gretly offend,
 Or time come that I wol down descend:
 But nathelès considereth this, (quod he) 9705
 Ther n'is no werkman, whatsoever he be,
 That may both werken wel and hastily:
 This wol be don at leiser pàrfitly.
 It is no force how longe that we play;
 In trewe wedlock coupled be we tway; 9710

✱. 9690. *And they han don*] This line has also been left out of the later editt. though it is in all the best mss. and in edit.
 Ca. 2. 'To supply its place the following line——

So hastid Januarie it must be don——
 has been inserted after ver. 9691, and the four lines have been
 made to rhyme together by adding *fone* at the end of ver. 9689;
 Let voiden all this hous in curteis wife *fone*.

And blessed be the yoke that we ben inne,
 For in our actes may ther be no sinne.
 A man may do no sinne with his wif,
 Ne hurt himselven with his owen knif,
 For we have leue to play us by the lawe. 9

Thus laboureth he til that the day gan dawne,
 And than he taketh a sop in fine clarre,
 And upright in his bed than sitteth he,
 And after that he sang ful loud and clere,
 And kist his wif, and maketh wanton chere. 9
 He was al coltish, ful of ragerie,
 And ful of jergon as a flecked pie.

The slacke sitin about his necke shaketh
 While that he sang, so chanteth he and craketh.
 But God wot what that May thought in hire he
 Whan she him saw up sitting in his sherte 9
 In his night cap, and with his necke lene:
 She praiseth not his playing worth a bene.
 Than sayd he thus; My reste wol I take,
 Now day is come, I may no lenger wake; 9
 And down he layd his hed and slept til prime.
 And afterward, whan that he saw his time,
 Up riseth January, but freshe May
 Held hire in chambre til the fourthe day,
 As usage is of wives for the beste; 9
 For every labour somtime mooste han reste,

¶ 9714. *Ne hurt himselven*] In *The Persones Tale* we
 a contrary doctrine; "God wote a man may see himself
 "his owen knif, and make himself dronken of his owen ton

les longe may he not endure;
 is to say, no livers creature,
 of fish, or brid, or best, or man.
 ow wol I speke of woful Damian, 9740
 : langureth for love, as ye shul here,
 fore I speke to him in this manere.
 , O fely Damian, alas!
 ver to this demand as in this cas;
 : shalt thou to thy lady freshe May 9745
 n thy wo? she wol alway say nay;
 f thou speke she wol thy wo bewrein:
 he thin help! I can no better sein.
 is like Damian in Venus fire
 enneth that he dieth for desire, 9750
 which he put his lif in aventure,
 nger might he in this wise endure,
 rively a penner gan he borwe,
 in a lettre wrote he all his sorwe,
 nere of a complaint or a lay, 9755
 his faire freshe Lady May,
 n a purse of silk heng on his sherte
 uth it put, and layd it at his herte.
 e mone that at none was thilke day
 January hath wedded freshe May 9760
 of Taure was into Cancer gliden,
 igh hath Maius in hire chambre abiden,

761. In *ten of Taure*] The greatest number of mss. read
 19, 100, or 10. But the time given (*four days complete*,
 167,) is not sufficient for the moon to pass from the 2d

As custome is unto thise nobles alle,
 A bride shal not eten in the halle
 Til dayes four, or three dayes at the leste, 9
 Ypassed ben, than let hire go to feste.
 The fourthe day complete fro none to none,
 Whan that the highe messe was ydone,
 In halle sat this January and May
 As fresh as is the bryghte somers day; 9
 And so besel how that this goode man
 Remembred him upon this Damian,
 And sayde, Seinte Marie, how may it be
 That Damian entendeth not to me?
 Is he ay like? or how may this betide? 9
 His squiers, which that stoden ther beside,
 Excused him because of his siknesse,
 Which letted him to don his besinesse;
 Non other cause mighte make him tary.
 That me forthinketh, quod this January; 9
 He is a gentil squier by my troathe,
 If that he died it were gret harme and routhe:
 He is as wise, discret, and as secree,
 As any man I wote of his degree,
 And therto manly and eke servisable, 9
 And for to ben a thrifty man right able.

degree of Taurus into Cancer. The mean daily motion of
 moon being = 13. 10. 35. her motion in 4 days is = 12. 22. 0
 or not quite 53 degrees; so that supposing her to set out
 the 2d of Taurus, she would not, in that time, be advan-
 ced beyond the 25th degree of Gemini. If she set out from
 10th degree of Taurus (as I have corrected the text) she m-
 properly enough be said, in four days, to be gliden into Cai

But after mete, as fone as ever I may,
 I wol myselfe visite him, and eke May,
 To don him all the comfort that I can.
 And for that word him blessed every man, 9790
 That of his bountee and his gentillesse
 He wolde so comforten in siknesse
 His squier, for it was a gentil dede.

Dame, quod this January, take good hede
 At after mete ye with your women alle, 9795
 (Whan that ye ben in chambre out of this halle)
 That all ye gon to see this Damian;
 Doth him disport, he is a gentil man,
 And telleth him that I wol him visite,
 Have I no thing but rested me a lite: 9800
 And spede you faste, for I wol abide
 Til that ye slepen faste by my side.
 And with that word he gan unto him calle
 A squier that was marshal of his halle,
 And told him certain thinges that he wolde. 9805

This freshe May hath streight hire way yholde,
 With all hire women, unto Damian;
 Doun by his beddes side sit she than,
 Comforting him as goodly as she may.

This Damian, whan that his time he say, 9810
 In secree wise his purse and eke his bill,
 In which that he ywritten had his will,
 Hath put into hire hond withouten more,
 Save that he fiked wonder depe and fore,

And softly to hire right thus sayd he; 9815
 Mercie, and that ye nat discover me,
 For I am ded if that this thing be kid.

This purse hath she in with hire bosome hid,
 And went hire way: ye get no more of me:
 But unto January ycome is she, 9820
 That on his beddes side fate ful soft.
 He taketh hire and kisseth hire ful oft,
 And layd him down to slepe. and that anon.
 She feined hire as that she muste gon
 Ther as ye wote that every wight mot nede; 9825
 And whan she of this bill hath taken hede
 She rent it all to cloutes at the last,
 And in the privee softly it cast.

Who studieth now but faire freshe May?
 Adoun by olde January she lay, 9830
 That slepte til the cough hath him awaked.
 Anon he prayd hire stripen hire al naked,
 He wolde of hire, he said, have som plesance,
 And said hire clothes did him encombrance.
 And she obeieth him, be hire lese or loth. 9835
 But lest that precious folk be with me wroth,
 How that he wrought I dare nat to you tell,
 Or wheder hire thought it paradis or hell:
 But ther I let hem werken in hir wise
 Til evesong rang, and that they must arise. 9840

Were it by destinee or aventure,
 Were it by influence or by nature,

Or constellation, that in swiche estat
 The heven stood at that time fortunat,
 As for to put a bill of Venus werkes 9845
 (For alle thing hath time, as sayn thise clerkes)
 To any woman for to get hire love,
 I cannot say, but grete God above,
 That knoweth that non act is causeles,
 He deme of all, for I wol hold my pees. 9850
 But soth is this, how that this freshe May
 Hath taken swiche impressioun that day
 Of pitee on this like Damian,
 That fro hire herte she ne driven can
 The remembrance for to don him ese. 9855
 Certain (thought she) whom that this thing displese
 I rekke not, for here I him assure
 To love him best of any creature,
 Though he no more hadde than his sherte.
 Lo, pitee renneth sone in gentil herte : 9860
 Here may ye seen how excellent franchise
 In women is whan they hem narwe avise.
 Som tyraunt is, as ther ben many on,
 That hath an herte as hard as any ston,
 Which wold han lette him sterven in the place 9865
 Wel rather than han granted him hire grace,
 And hem rejoycen in hir cruel pride,
 And rekken not to ben an homicide.
 This gentil May, fulfilled of pitee,
 Right of hire hond a lettre maketh she, 9870

In which she grãnteth him hire veray grace :
 Ther lacked nought but only day and place
 Wher that she might unto his lust suffice ;
 For it shal be right as he wol devise.

And whan she saw hire time upon a day 9875
 To visiten this Damian goth this May,
 And sotilly this lettre down she threst
 Under his pilwe, rede it if him lest.
 She taketh him by the hond, and hard him twist,
 So secretly that no wight of it wist, 9880
 And bade him ben all hol ; and forth she went
 To January whan he for hire sent.

Up riseth Damian the nexte morwe,
 Al passed was his siknesse and his forwe.
 He kembeth him, he prometh him and piketh, 9885
 He doth all that his lady lust and liketh ;
 And eke to January he goth as lowe
 As ever did a dogge for the howe.
 He is so plesant unto every man,
 (For craft is all, who so that don it can) 9890
 That every wight is fain to speke him good ;
 And fully in his ladies grace he flood.

Thus let I Damian about his nede,
 And in my Tale forth I wol procede.

Som clerkes holden that felicitee 9895
 Stant in delit, and therfore certain he,

¶. 9888. *a dogge for the howe*] A dog used in shooting. See before, ver. 6951.

This noble January, with all his might,
 In honest wife as longeth to a knight,
 Shope him to liven ful deliciously.
 His housing, his array, as honestly 9900
 To his degree was makēd as a kinges.
 Amonges other of his honest thinges
 He had a gardin walled all with ston,
 So fayre a gardin wote I no wher non;
 For out of doute I veraily suppose 9905
 That he that wrote the Romant of the Rose
 Ne coude of it the beautee wel devise;
 Ne Priapus ne mighte not suffice,
 Though he be god of Gardins, for to tell
 The beautee of the gardin, and the well, 9910
 That stood under a laurer alway grene:
 Ful often time he Pluto and his quene
 Proserpina and alle hir Faerie,
 Disporten hem and maken melodie
 About that well, and daunced, as men told. 9915

This noble knight, this January the old,
 Swiche deintee hath in it to walke and pley,
 That he wol suffre no wight bere the key
 Sauf he himself, for of the smal wiket
 He bare alway of silver a cliket, 9920
 With which whan that him list he it unshette;
 And whan that he wold pay his wifes dette
 In somer seson thider wold he go,
 And May his wif, and no wight but they two;

And thinges which that were not don a-bedde 9925
 He in the gardin parfourned hem, and spedde.

And in this wise many a mery day
 Lived this January and freshe May :
 But worldly joye may not alway endure
 To January ne to no creature. 9930

O soden hap, o thou Fortune unstable!
 Like to the scorpion so deceivable,
 That flatrest with thy hed whan thou wolt sting;
 Thy tayl is deth thurgh thin enveniming.
 O brotel joye! o swete poyson queinte! 9935
 O monstre! that so sotilly canst peinte
 Thy giftes under hewe of stedfastnesse,
 That thou deceivest bothe more and lesse,
 Why hast thou January thus deceived,
 That haddest him for thy ful frend received? 9940
 And now thou hast beraft him both his eyen,
 For sorwe of which desireth he to dyen.

Alas! this noble January free,
 Amidde his lust and his prosperitee,
 Is waxen-blind, and that al sodenly. 9945
 He wepeth and he waileth pitoufly,
 And therewithall the fire of jalousie
 (Lest that his wif shuld fall in som folie)
 So brent his herte that he wolde fain
 That som man had both him and hire yflain; 9950
 For nother after his deth ne in his lif
 Ne wold he that she were no love ne wif,

THE MERCHANTES TALE.

But ever live as a widewe in clothes blake,
 Sole as the turtle that hath lost hire make.
 But at the last, after a moneth or tway
 His sorwe gan asswage, soth to say;
 For whan he wist it might non other be
 He patiently toke his adversitee;
 Save out of doute he nat may nat forgon
 That he n'as jalous ever more in on;
 Which jalousie it was so outrageous,
 That neither in halle; ne in non other hous,
 Ne in non other place never the mo,
 He n'olde suffre hire for to ride or go
 But if that he had honde on hire alway;
 For which ful often wepeth freshe May,
 That loveth Damian so brenningly,
 That she mooste either dien sodenly
 Or elles she mooste han him as hire lest:
 She waited whan hire herte wold to-brest. 99
 Upon that other side Damian
 Becomen is the sorwefullest man
 That ever was, for neither night ne day
 Ne might he speke a word to freshe May,
 As to his purpos, of no swiche matere,
 But if that January must it here, 997.
 That had an hand upon hire evermo:
 That natheles by writing to and fro,
 [r. 9967. *so brenningly*] Vulg. *benignly*. Mss. *AA*. 1, 2, read
venly; which is probably a gloss for the true word, *ben-*
nyly. See before, ver. 1566. Mss. *A*. reads *benyngly*.
 Volume III.

And priver signes, wist he what she ment,
And she knew eke the fin of his entent. 9980

O January! what might it thee availe
Though thou might seen as fer as shippes faile?
For as good is blind to deceived be
As be deceived whan a man may see.
Lo Argus, which that had an hundred eyen, 9985
For all that ever he coude pore or prien,
Yet was he blent, and, God wot, so ben mo,
That wenen wisly that it be not so.
Passe over is an ese; I say no more.

This freshe May, of which I spake of yore, 9990
In warm weȝ hath enprented the cliket
That January bare of the smal wiket,
By which into his gardin oft he went,
And Damian, that knew all hire entent,
The cliket contrefeted prively: 9995
Ther n'is no more to say, but hastily
Som wonder by this cliket shal betide,
Which ye shul heren if ye wol abide.

O noble Ovide! soth sayest thou, God wote,
What sleight is it, if Love be long and hote, 10000

v. 9983. *For as good is]* The reading in the text is from *mf.*
A/k. 1; *mf. A.* reads thus;

For as good is al blind deceived be.
I shoul not dislike

For as good is al blind deceived to be
As be deceived whan a man may see.

Var. 10000. *What sleight is it]* These lines are a little different in *msf. C. 1, HA.*

What sleighte is it, though it be long and hote,
That Love n'il find it out in som manere?

That he n'ill find it out in som manere?
 By Pyramus and Thisbe may men lere;
 Though they were kept ful long and streit over all,
 They ben accorded, rowning thurgh a wall,
 Ther no wight coude han founden swiche a sleighte.
 But now to purpos. Er that daies eighte 10006
 Were passed of the month of Juil, befil
 That January hath caught so gret a will,
 Thurgh egging of his wif, him for to play
 In his gardin, and no wight but they tway, 10010
 That in a morwe unto this May said he,
 Rise up, my wif, my love, my lady free!
 The turtles vois is herd, myn owen swete!
 The winter is gon, with all his raines wete.
 Come forth now with thin eyen columbine; 10015
 Wel fairer ben thy brests than ony wine.
 The gardin is enclosed all aboute;
 Come forth, my white spoufe, for out of doute
 Thou hast me wounded in myn herte, o wif!
 No spot in thee n'as never in all thy lif. 10020
 Come forth, and let us taken our disport;
 I chese thee for my wif and my comfort.
 Swiche olde lewed wordes used he.
 On Damian a signe made she,
 That he shuld go before with his cliket. 10025
 This Damian hath opened the wicket,
 And in he stert, and that in swiche manere
 That no wight might him see neyther yhere,

For veray love ; this is withouten doute :
Now kisse me, wif, and let us come aboute.

This freshe May, whan she thise wordes herd,
Benignely to January answerd, 10060
But first and forward she began to wepe :
I have, quod she, a soule for to kepe
As wel as ye, and also min honour,
And of my wifhood, thilke tendre flour
Which that I have assured in your hond, 10065
Whan that the preest to you my body bond,
Wherefore I wol answere in this manere,
With leve of you, myn owen lord so dere.

I pray to God that never daw that day
That I ne sterve, as foule as woman may, 10070
If ever I do unto my kin that shame,
Or elles I empeire so my name
That I be false ; and if I do that lakke
Do stripen me and put me in a sakke,
And in the nexte river do me drenche : 10075
I am a gentil woman and no wenche.
Why speke ye thus ? but men ben ever untrewes,
And women han represe of you ay newe.
Ye con non other daliance, I leve,
But speke to us as of untrust and reprove. 10080

And with that word she saw wher Damian
Sat in the bush, and coughen she began ;
And with hire finger a signe made she
That Damian shuld climbe up on a tre

Whan that his wif wol don him vilanie, 10139
 Than shal he knowen all hire harlotrie,
 Both in represe of hire and other mo.

Ye, Sire, quod Proserpine, and wol ye so?
 Now by my modre Ceres soule I swere
 That I shal yeve hire suffisant answere, 10140
 And alle women after for hire sake,
 That though they ben in any gilt ytake
 With face bold they shul hemselve excuse,
 And bere hem doun that wolden hem accuse :
 For lacke of answere non of us shul dien. 10145
 Al had ye seen a thing with both your eyen,
 Yet shul we fro visage it hardely,
 And wepe, and swere, and chiden, subtilly,
 That ye shul ben as lewed as ben gees.

What rekketh me of your auctoritees? 10150
 I wote wel that this Jewe, this Salomon,
 Fond of us women fooles many on :
 But though that he ne fond no good woman,
 Ther hath yfonden many an other man
 Women ful good, and trewe and vertuous, 10155
 Witnesse on hem that dwelte in Cristes hous;
 With martyrdom they preved hir constance.
 The Romain gestes maken remembrance

¶. 10158. *The Romain gestes*] He means the collection of stories called *Gesta Romanorum*, of which I once thought to say a few words here, in order to recommend it to a little more attention than it has hitherto met with from those who have written upon the poetical inventions of the middle ages; but as many of the stories in that collection are taken from a treatise of Petrus Alphonsus, *De Clericali Disciplina*, (an older and

Of many a veray trewe wif also.

But Sire, ne be not wroth al be it so, 10160

Though that he said he fond no good woman;

I pray you take the sentence of the man :

He ment thus, that in foverain bountee

N'is non but God, no, nouthur he ne she.

Ey, for the veray God that n'is but on 10165

What maken ye so moche of Salomon ?

What though he made a temple, Goddes hous ?

What though he were riche and glorious ?

So made he eke a temple of false goddes;

How might he don a thing that more forbode is ?

Parde as faire as ye his name emplastre 10171

He was a lechour and an idolastre,

And in his elde he veray God forfoke ;

And if that God ne hadde (as saith the boke)

Spared him for his fathers sake, he sholde 10175

Han lost his regne rather than he wolde.

I sete nat of all the vilanie

That he of women wrote a boterflie.

I am a woman ; nedes moste I speke,

Or swell unto that time min herte breke : 10180

For sin he said that we ben jangleresses,

As ever mote I brooken hole my tressies

I shal nat sparen for no curtesie

To speke him harm that sayth us vilanie.

(Still more forgotten work) I shall reserve what I have to offer upon this subject till I come to The Tale of Melibeus, where Piers Alphonso is quoted.

THE MARCHANTES TALE.

That coude climbe: alas! alas! (quod he)
 For I am blinde. Ye, Sire, no force, quod she;
 But wold ye vouchesauf, for Goddes sake, I
 The pery in with your armes for to take,
 (For wel I wot that ye mistrusten me)
 Than wold I climben wel ynough, (quod she)
 So I my fote might fetten on your back.

Certes, said he, therin shal be no lack, IC
 Might I you helpen with min herte blood.

He stoupeþ doun, and on his back she stood,
 And caught hire by a twist; and up she goth.
 (Ladies, I pray you that ye be not wroth;
 I can nat glose; I am a rude man:) IC
 And sodenly anon this Damian
 Gan pullen up the smock, and in he throng.

And whan that Pluto saw this grete wrong
 To January he yaf again his sight,
 And made him see as wel as ever he might; IC

¶ 10227. *Ganpullen*] After this verse the editt. (except
 and *Pynf.* 1, 2,) have eight others of the lowest and im-
 perfuous ribaldry that can well be conceived. It would
 mere loss of time to argue from the lines themselves that
 were not written by Chaucer, as we have this short and
 five reason for rejecting them, that they are not found in
 one ms. of authority. They are not found in mss. *A. C.* 1.
 1, 2. *HA. B. C. D. G. Bod. a. C. γ. δ. ε. ζ. C. 2. T. N. C.*
mss. E. H. I. W. either the whole Tale or that part where
 might be looked for is wanting. The only tolerable r-
 which I have seen them is *F.* and there they have been a
 in the margin by a later hand, perhaps not older than Cax-
 first edition.

And whan he thus had caught his sight again
 Ne was ther never man of thing so fain;
 But on his wif his thought was ever mo.

Up to the tree he cast his eyen two,
 And saw how Damian his wife had dressed. 10235
 In swiche manere it may not ben expressed,
 But if I wolde speke uncurteisly;
 And up he yaf a roing and a cry,
 As doth the mother whan the child shal die:
 Out! helpe! alas! harow! he gan to cry; 10240
 O stronge lady *More*, what doest thou?
 And she answered, Sire, what aileth you?
 Have patience and reson in your minde,
 I have you holpen on both your eyen blinde.
 Up peril of my soule, I shal nat lien, 10245
 As me was taught to helpen with your eyen
 Was nothing better for to make you see
 Than strogle with a man upon a tree:
 God wot I did it in ful good entent.

Strogle! quod he; ye, algate in it went. 10250
 Gode yeve you both on shames deth to dien;

✧. 10240. *Out! helpe!*] Two lines which follow this in the common edit. are omitted for the reasons stated in the note upon ver. 10227; and I shall take the same liberty, upon exactly the same grounds, with four more which have been inserted in those edit. after ver. 10250.

✧ 10241. *O stronge lady More*] As all the best mss. support this reading I have not departed from it, for fear *More* should have some signification that I am not aware of. Some mss. have *fioure*, ms. *G. boure*, edit. *Ca. 2, bore; bora, meretrix, island*,

He swived thee, I saw it with min eyen,
And elles be I honged by the halfe.

Than is, quod she, my medicine al false ;
For certainly if that ye mighten see 10255
Ye wold not say thise wordes unto me.
Ye have som glimfing, and no parfit fight.

I see, quod he, as wel as ever I might
(Thanked be God) with both min eyen two,
And by my feith me thought he did thee so. 10260

Ye mase, ye masen, good Sire, quod she ;
This thank have I for I have made you see :
Alas ! quod she, that ever I was so kind.

Now Dame, quod he, let al passe out of mind :
Come down, my lefe, and if I have missaid 10265
God helpe me so as I am evil appaid :
But by my fadres soule I wende have sein
How that this Damian had by thee lein,
And that thy smock had lein upon his brest.

Ye, Sire, quod she, ye may wene as you lest : 10270
But, Sire, a man that waketh of his slepe
He may not sodenly wel taken kepe
Upon a thing, ne seen it parfitly,
Til that he be adawed veraily :
Right so a man that long hath blind ybe 10275
He may not sodenly so wel ysee,

†. 10261. *Ye mase, ye masen*] The final *n* has been added without authority, and unnecessarily. This line is very oddly written in mss. *A/k.* 1, 2 ;

Ya may ya may ya quod she.

Volume III.

R

First whan his fight is newe comen agein,
 As he that hath a day or two ysein.
 Til that your fight yfateled be a while
 Ther may ful many a fighte you begile. 10280
 Beware, I pray you, for by heven King
 Ful many a man weneth to see a thing,
 And it is all another than it semeth :
 He which that misconceiveth oft misdemeth.
 And with that word she lep down fro the tree. 10285
 This January who is glad but he ?
 He kisseth hire and clippeth hire ful oft,
 And on hire wombe he stroketh hire ful soft,
 And to his paleis home he hath hire lad.
 Now, goode men, I pray you to be glad. 10290
 Thus endeth here my Tale of Januarie ;
 God bleffe us, and his moder Seinte Marie ! 10292

THE SQUIERES PROLOGUE.

By Goddes mercy, sayde oure Hoste tho,
 Now swiche a wif I preie God kepe me fro.
 I.o, swiche sleightes and subtilitees 10295
 In women ben ; for ay as besy as bees

* 10293.] It has been said in the *Discourse*, &c. §. 23. that this new Prologue has been prefixed to 'The Squieres' Tale upon the authority of the best mss. 'They are as follows ; A. C. 1, Ask. 1, 2, HA. D. Bod. α. γ. δ. The concurrence of the first five mss. would alone have been more than sufficient to outweigh the authorities in favour of the other Prologue. Ed. C. 2, (though it has not this Prologue) agrees with these mss. in placing 'The Squieres' Tale after 'The Marchantes.

Ben they us fely men for to deceive,
 And from a sothe wol they ever weive:
 By this Marchantes Tale it preveth wel.
 But natheles, as trewe as any stele 10300
 I have a wif, though that she poure be,
 But of hire tonge a labbing shrewe is she;
 And yet she hath an hepe of vices mo.
 Therof no force; let all swiche thinges go.
 But wete ye what? in conseil be it seyde, 10305
 Me reweth fore I am unto hire teyde;
 For and I shulde rekene every vice
 Which that she hath, ywis I were to nice;
 And cause why, it shulde reported be
 And told to hire of som of this compaignie, 10310
 (Of whom it nedeth not for to declare,
 Sin women connen utter swiche chaffare)
 And eke my wit sufficeth not therto
 To tellen all; wherfore my Tale is do.
 Squier, come ner, if it youre wille be, 10315
 And say somwhat of love, for certes ye
 Connen theron as moche as any man.
 Nay, Sire, quod he, but swiche thing as I can

†. 10298. *weive*] This verb is generally used transitively, to wave, to relinquish, a thing; but it has also a neuter signification, to depart, as here. See also ver. 4728, 9357.

†. 10312. *Sin women connen utter*] Ms. *A.* reads *soute*, but others have *utter*, which I believe is right, though I confess that I do not clearly understand the passage. The phrase has occurred before, ver. 6103;

With danger *utiren* we all our *chaffare*.

With hertly wille, for I wol not rebelle
 Agein your last, a Tale wol I telle.
 Have me excused if I speke amis :
 My wille is good ; and lo, my Tale is this.

THE SQUIERES TALE.

AT Sarra, in the lond of Tartarie,
 Ther dwelt a king that werreied Ruffie,
 Thurgh which ther died many a doughty man. I
 This noble king was cleped Cambuscan,
 Which in his time was of so gret renoun
 That ther n'as no wher in no regioun
 So excellent a lord in alle thing ;
 Him lacked nought that longeth to a king, I
 As of the secte of which that he was borne.
 He kept his lay to which he was yfsworne,
 And therto he was hardy, wise, and riche,
 And pitous and just, and alway yliche,
 Trewe of his word, benigne and honourable, I
 Of his corage as any centre stable,
 Yong, fresh, and strong, in armes desirous,
 As any bachelor of all his hous.
 A faire person he was and fortunate,
 And kept alway so wel real estat I

The Squieres Tale] The King of Araby sendith to Caml
 King of Sarra a horse and a sword of rare qualite, and
 daughter Canace a glasse and a ring, by the virtue where
 understandeth the language of all fowles. Much of this
 either lost or else never finished by Chaucer. *Urry,*

That ther n'as no wher swiche another man.

This noble king, this Tartre Cambuscan,
Hadde two sones by Elfeta his wif,
Of which the eldest sone highte Algarisf,
That other was ycleped Camballo. 10345

A doughter had this worthy king also,
That yongest was, and highte Canace:
But for to tellen you all hire beautee
It lith not in my tonge ne in my conning;
I dare not undertake so high a thing: 10350
Min English eke is unsufficient;

It muste ben a rethor excellent,
That coude his colours longing for that art,
If he shuld hire descriven ony part:
I am non swiche; I mote speke as I can. 10355

And so befel that whan this Cambuscan
Hath twenty winter borne his diademe,
As he was wont fro yere to yere I deme,
He let the feste of his nativitee
Don crien thurghout Sarra his citee 10360
The last idus of March after the yere.

Phebus the sonne ful jolif was and clere,
For he was nigh his exaltation
In Martes face, and in his mansion

†. 10344. *Of which the eldest sone*] I have added *sone* for the sake of the metre.

†. 10364. *and in his mansion*] *His* refers to Mars, and not to the sun. "Aries est l'exaltation du Soleil ou 19 degre. et si est "Aries maison de Mars," *Calend. des Berg.* sign. l. ult. Leo

In Aries, the colerike hote signe : 10365
 Ful lusty was the wether and benigne,
 For which the foules again the sonne shene :
 What for the feson and the yonge grene
 Ful loude songen hir affections :
 Hem semed ~~ham~~ gotten hem protections 10370
 Against the swerd of winter kene and cold.
 This Cambuscan, of which I have you tokt,
 In real vestiments, sit on his deis
 With diademe, ful high in his paleis,
 And holt his feste so solempne and so riche 10375
 That in this world ne was ther non it liche,
 Of which if I shal tellen all the array
 Than wold it occupie a somers day ;
 And eke it nedeth not for to devise
 At every cours the order of hir service : 10380
 I wol not tellen of hir strange sewes,
 Ne of hir swannes ne hir heronsewes :

was the *mansjon* of the sun, *ibid.* sign. K. 1. Aries is there also said to be *signe chault et sec*.

¶ 10381. *strange sewes*] A sewer was an officer so called from his placing the dishes upon the table. *Aseour*, Fr. from *asseoir* to place. In the establishment of the king's household there are still four Gentlemen Sewers. *Sewes* here seem to signify dishes from the same original, as *assiete*, in Fr. still signifies a little dish or plate. See *Gower, Conf. Amant.* fol. 115, b.;

The fleshe, whan it was so to-hewe,
 She taketh, and maketh therof a *sewe*.—

¶ 10382. *heronsewes*] *Heronceaux*, Fr. according to the Glossary. At the intronization of Archbishop Nevil, 6 Edw. I. there were *heronhawes* liii C. *Irl. Collect.* vol. vi. 2. At another feast in 1530 we read of 16 *bearonsewes*, every one 12 *Park's D. C.* vol. ii. 12.

Eke in that lond, as tellen knightes old,
 Ther is som mete that is ful deintee hold,
 That in this lond men recche of it ful smal: 10385
 Ther n'is no man that may reporten al.
 I wol not tarien you, for it is prime,
 And for it is no fruit, but losse of time:
 Unto my purpose I wol have recours.

And so befell that after the thridde cours, 10390
 While that this king sit thus in his nobley,
 Herking his ministralles hir thinges pley,
 Beforne him at his bord deliciously,
 In at the halle dore al sodenly
 Ther came a knight upon a stede of bras, 10395
 And in his hond a brod mirrour of glas;
 Upon his thombe he had of gold a ring,
 And by his side a naked swerd hanging;
 And up he rideth to the highe bord.
 In all the halle ne was ther spoke a word 10400
 For mervaille of this knight; him to behold
 Ful befily they waiten yong and old.

This strange knight that come thus sodenly,
 Al armed save his hed ful richely,
 Salueth king and quene, and lordes alle, 10405
 By order as they saten in the halle,
 With so high reverence and observance,
 As wel in speche as in his contenance,
 That Gawain with his olde curtesie,
 Though he were come agen out of Faerie, 10410

Ne coude him not amenden with a word:
And after this befor the highe bord
He with a manly vois sayd his meſſage,
After the forme uſed in his langage,
Withouten vice of ſillable or of letter: 10415
And for his tale ſhulde ſeme the better,
Accordant to his wordes was his chere,
As teecheth art of ſpeche hem that it lere.
Al be it that I cannot ſoune his ſtile,
Ne cannot climben over ſo high a ſtile, 10420
Yet ſay I this, as to comun entent,
Thus much amounteth all that ever he ment,
If it ſo be that I have it in mind.

He ſayd, The King of Arabie and of Inde,
My liege Lord, on this ſolempne day, 10425
Salueth you as he beſt can and may,
And ſendeth you, in honour of your feſte,
By me, that am al redy at your heſte,
This ſtede of bras, that euily and wel
Can in the ſpace of a day naturel 10430
(This is to ſayn, in four-and-twenty houres)
Wher ſo you liſt, in drought or elles ſhoures,
Beren your body into every place
To which your herte willeth for to pace,
Withouten wemme of you thurgh ſoule or faire;
Or if you liſt to ſleen as high in the aire 10436
As doth an egle, whan him liſt to fore,
This ſame ſtede ſhal bere you evermore,

Withouten harme, till ye be ther you left,
(Though that ye slepen on his back or rest) 10440
And turne again with writhing of a pin;
He that it wrought he coude many a gin;
He waited many a constellation
Or he had don this operation,
And knew ful many a sele and many a bond. 10445

This mirroure eke that I have in min hond
Hath swiche a might that men may in it see
Whan ther shal falle ony aduersitee
Unto your regne or to yourself also,
And openly who is your frend or fo; 10450
And over all this, if any lady bright
Hath set hire herte on any maner wight,
If he be false she shal his trefon see,
His newe love, and all his subtiltee,
So openly that ther shal nothing hide. 10455

Wherefore again this lusty somer tide
This mirroure and this ring, that ye may se,
He hath sent to my Lady Canace,
Your excellent doughter that is here.

The vertue of this ring, if ye wol here, 10460
Is this, that if hire list it for to were
Upon hire thombe, or in hire purse it bere,
Ther is no foule that fleeth under heaven
That she ne shal wel understond his steven,
And know his mening openly and plaine, 10465
And answere him in his langage again;

And every gras that groweth upon rote
 She shal eke know, and whom it wol do bote,
 All be his woundes never so depe and wide. 10469

This naked fwerd, that hangeth by my side,
 Swiche vertue hath, that what man that it smite,
 Thurghout his armure it wol kerve and bite,
 Were it as thicke as is a braunched oke;
 And what man that is wounded with the stroke
 Shal never be hole, til that you lift of grace 10475
 To stroken him with the platte in thilke place
 Ther he is hurt; this is as much to fain,
 Ye moten with the platte fwerd again
 Stroken him in the wound and it wol close.
 This is the veray soth withouten glose: 10480
 It failleth not while it is in your hold.

And whan this knight hath thus his tale told
 He rideth out of halle, and doun he light.
 His stede, which that shone as sonne bright,
 Stant in the court as stille as any ston. 10485
 This knight is to his chambre ladde anon,
 And is unarmed, and to the mete yfette.
 Thise presents ben ful richelich yfette,
 This is to fain, the fwerd and the mirrour,
 And borne anon into the highe tour 10490
 With certain officers ordained therfore;
 And unto Canace the ring is bore
 Solempnely. ther she sat at the table.
 But likerly, withouten any fable, .:

The hors of bras, that may not be remued, 10495
 It stant as it were to the ground yglued:
 Ther may no man out of the place it drive
 For non engine of windas or polive:
 And cause why, for they con not the craft,
 And therfore in the place they han it last 10500
 Til that the knight hath taught hem the manere
 To voiden him, as ye shal after here.

Gret was the prees that swarmed to and fro
 To gaureu on this hors that stondeth so;
 For it so high was, and so brod and long, 10505
 So wel proportioned for to be strong,
 Right as it were a stede of Lumbardie,
 Therwith so horsly and so quik of eye
 As it a gentil Poileis courser were;
 For certes fro his tayl unto his ere 10510
 Nature ne art ne coud him not amend
 In no degree, as all the peple wend.

But evermore hir moste wonder was
 How that it coude gon and was of bras :

¶. 10509. *a gentil Poileis courser*] A horse of Apulia, which in old French was usually called *Poille*. The horses of that country were much esteemed. *Mf. Boil.* James VI. 142. Richard Archbishop of Armagh, in the 14th century, says in praise of our St. Thomas, "Quod nec mulus Hispaniæ, nec dextrarius Apuliæ, nec repedo Æthiopiæ, nec elephantus Asiæ, nec camelus Syriæ, hoc a sinu nostra Angliæ aptior sine audentior invenitur ad prælia." He had before informed his audience that "Thomas Anglice idem est quod Thom. Asinus." There is a patent in *Rymur*, 2 Edw. II. "De dextrariis in Lumbardia cunctis."

It was of Fæerie, as the peple semed : 10515

Diverse folk diversely han demed :

As many beds as many wittes ben.

They murmured as doth a swarme of becn,

And maden skilles after hir fantasies,

Reherfing of the olde poetries, 10520

And sayd it was ylike the Pegasee,

The hors that hadde winges for to flee,

Or elles it was the Grekes hors Sinon,

That broughte Troye to destruccioun,

As men moun in thise olde gestes rede. 10525

Min herte (quod on) is evermore in drede ;

I trow som men of armes ben therin,

That shapen hem this citee for to win :

It were right good that al swiche thing were know.

Another rowned to his felaw low, 10530

And sayd, He lieth, for it is rather like

An apparence ymade by som magike,

As jogelours plaien at thise festes grete.

Of sondry doutes thus they jangle and trete,

As lewed peple demen comunly 10535

Of thinges that ben made more subtilly

Than they can in hir lewednesse comprehende :

They demen gladly to the badder ende.

And som of hem wondred on the mirrour

That born was up in to the maister tour, 10540

✧. 10523. *the Grekes hors Sinon*] This is rather an awkward expression for—*the horse of Sinon the Greck*, or, as we might say, *Sinon the Greck's horse*.

How men mighte in it swiche thinges see.

Another answerd and sayd, It might wel be

Naturelly by compositions

Of angles and of she reflections;

And saide that in Rome was swiche on. 10545

They speke of Albazen and Vitellon,

And Aristotle, that writen in hir lives

Of queinte mirroures and of prospectives,

As knowen they that han hir bookes herd.

And other folk han wondred on the swerd 10550

That wolde percen thurghout every thing;

And fell in speche of Telephus the king,

And of Achilles for his queinte spere,

For he coude with it bothe hele and dere,

Right in swiche wise as men may with the swerd

Of which right now ye have yourselven herd. 10556

They speken of fondry harding of metall,

And speken of medicines therwithall,

And how and whan it shuld yharded be,

Which is unknow algates unto me. 10560

Tho speken they of Canacees ring,

And saiden all that swiche a wonder thing

†. 10546. *Albazen and Vitellon*] *Albazeni et Vitellonis Opticæ* are extant, printed at Basil 1572. The first is supposed by his editor to have lived about *A. D.* 1100, and the second to *A. D.* 1270.

†. 10561. *Canacees*] This word should perhaps have had an accent on the first *e*—*Canacées*, to shew that it is to be pronounced as of four syllables. So also below, ver. 10945;

And swooneth eft in *Canacæus* barme.

Of craft of ringes herd they never non,
 Save that he Moises and King Salomon
 Hadden a name of conning in swiche art. 10565
 Thus fain the peple, and drawn heer apart.

But natheles som falden that it was
 Wonder to maken of ferne ashen glas,
 And yet is glas nought like ashen of ferne;
 But for they han yknowen it so ferne, 10570
 Therefore ceseth his jangling and his wonder.

As fore wondren som on cause of thonder,
 On ebbe and flood, on gossomer and on mist,
 And on all thing til that the cause is wist.

Thus janglen they, and demen and devise, 10575
 Til that the king gan fro his bord arise.

Phebus hath left the angle meridional,
 And yet ascending was the beste real,
 The gentil Leon, with his Aldrian,
 Whan that this Tartre king, this Cambuscan, 10580
 Rose from his bord, ther as he sat ful hie :
 Beforen him goth the loude minstrelcie,
 Til he come to his chambre of parements,
 Ther as they founden divers instruments,
 That it is like an heven for to here. 10585

Now dauncen lusty Venus children dere,

¶ 10570. *yknown it so ferne*] Known it so before. I take *ferne* to be a corruption of *ferne*, (*foran*, Sax.) So in *Tro. ver.* 1176, *ferne yere* seems to signify former years. In *P. P.* fol. 80, b. *ferne* ago is used as long ago.

¶ 10583. *chambre of parements*] *Chambre de parent* is translated by Cotgrave the presence-chamber, and *Lit de pare-*

For in the Fish his lady sat ful hie,
And loketh on hem with a frendly eye.

'This noble king is set upon his throne;
This straunge knight is set to him ful sone, 10590
And on the daunce he goth with Canace.

Here is the revell and the jolites
That is not able a dull man to devise:
He must han knowen Love and his servise,
And ben a festlich man, as fresh as May, 10595
That shulde you devisen swiche array.

Who coude tellen you the forme of daunces
So uncouth, and so freshe contenaunces,
Swiche subtil lokings and dissimulings,
For dred of jalous mennes apperceivings? 10600
No man but Launcelot, and he is ded;
Therefore I passe over all this lustyhed;
I say no more, but in this jolinesse
I lete hem til men to the souper hem dresse.

The steward bit the spices for to hie, 10605
And eke the win, in all this melodye;

ment a bed of state. *Paréments* originally signified all sorts of
ornamental furniture or clothes, from *parer*, Fr. to adorn. See
ver. 2503, and *Leg. of G. W. Dido*, ver. 181;

To dauncing *chambres*, ful of *parémentes*;
Of riche beddes and of pavémentes,
This Eneas is ledde after the metc.

The Italians have the same expression; *Ist. d. Conc. Trident.*
l. iii.; "Il Pontefice—ritornato alla camera de paramenti co'
"Cardinali."—

†. 10587. in the Fish] See the note on ver. 6284.

'The ushers and the squierie ben gon,
'The spices and the win is come anon :
'They ete and drinke, and whan this had an end
Unto the temple, as reson was, they wend : 10610
'The service don they soupen all by day.

What nedeth you reherfen hir array ?
Eche man wot wel that at a kinges feft
Is plentee to the most and to the lest,
And deintees mo than ben in my knowing. 10615

At after souper goth this noble king
To seen this hors of bras, with all a route
Of lordes and of ladies him aboute.
Swiche wondring was ther on this hors of bras,
'That sin the gret assege of Troye was 10620
'Ther as men wondred on an hors also,
Ne was ther swiche a wondring as was tho.
But, finally, the king asketh the knight
'The vertue of this courser and the might,
And praied him to tell his governaunce. 10625

'This hors anon gan for to trip and daunce,
Whan that the knight laid hond up on his rein,
And saide, Sire, ther n'is no more to fain,
But whan you list to riden any where
Ye moten trill a pin stant in his cre, 10630
Which I shal telien you betwixt us two,
Ye moten nempne him to what place also,
Or to what contree, that you list to ride.
And whan ye come ther as you list abide

Bid him descend, and trill another pin, 10635
 (For therin lieth the effect of all the gin)
 And he wol down descend and don your will,
 And in that place he wol abiden still;
 Though al the world had the contrary swore
 He shal not thennes be drawe ne be bore : 10640
 Or if you list to bid him thennes go
 Trille this pin, and he wol vanish anon
 Out of the sight of every maner wight,
 And come agen, be it by day or night,
 When that you list to clepen him again 10645
 In swiche a guise as I shal to you sain
 Betwixen you and me, and that ful sone.
 Ride when you list, ther n'is no more to done.

Enfourmed when the king was of the knight,
 And hath conceived in his wit aright 10650
 The maner and the forme of all this thing,
 Ful glad and blith this noble doughty king
 Repaireth to his revel as beforne.
 The bridel is in to the tour yborne,
 And kept among his jewels lese and dere : 10655
 The hors vanisht, I n'ot in what manere,
 Out of hir sight; ye get no more of me :
 But thus I lete in lust and jolitee
 This Cambuscan his lordes festeyng
 Til that wel nigh the day began to spring. 10660

* 10660. *Til that wel nigh*] *That* has been added for the sake
 of the metre. We might read, with some mss.;

Til wel nigh the day began for to spring.

Pars secunda.

The norice of degeſtion, the ſlepe,
 Gan on hem winke, and bad hem taken kepe
 That mochel drinke and labour wol have reſt,
 And with a galping mouth hem all he keſt,
 And ſaid, that it was time to lie adoun, 10665
 For blood was in his domination :
 Cherifheth blood, natures frend, quod he.

They thanken him galping, by two, by three;
 And every wight gan drawe him to his reſt,
 As ſlepe hem bade; they toke it for the beſt. 10670

Hir dremes ſhul not now be told for me;
 Ful were hir hedes of fumofiſtee,
 That cauſeth dreme, of which ther is no charge :
 They ſlepen til that it was prime large,
 The moſte part, but it were Canace; 10675
 She was ful meſurable as women be;
 For if hire father had ſhe take hire leve
 To gon to reſt ſone after it was eve;
 I hire liſte not appalled for to be,
 Nor on the morwe unfeſtliche for to ſee, 10680
 And ſlept hire fiſte ſlepe. and than awoke :
 For ſwicke a joy ſhe in hire herte toke
 Both of hire queinte ring and of hire mirroure,
 That twenty time ſhe chaunged hire colour.

¶ 10663. *That mochel drinke and labour*] 80 mss. C. 1. H.A.
 In mss. A. it is, *That myrthe and labour*; in Aſk. 1, 2, *That af-*
ter moche labour; in ſeveral other mss. and editt. Ca. 1, 2, *That*
he merr and labour. We muſt ſearch further, I apprehend,
 for the true reading.

And in hire slepe right for the impressioun 10685
Of hire mirrour she had a visioun;
Wherfore or that the sonne gan up glide
She clepeth upon hire maistresse hire beside,
And saide that hire luste for to arise.

This olde women that ben gladly wise, 10690
As is hire maistresse, answerd hire anon,
And said, Madam, whider wol ye gon
Thus erly? for the folk ben all in rest.

I wol, quod she, arisen (for me lest
No longer for to slepe) and walken aboute. 10695

Hire maistresse clepeth women a gret route,
And up they risen wel a ten or twelve;
Up riseth freshe Canace hire selfe,
As rody and bright as the yonge sonne
That in the Ram is foure degrees yronne; 10700
No higher was he whan she redy was;
And forth she walketh esily a pas,
Arrayed after the lusty seson fote
Lightely for to playe, and walken on fote,
Nought but with five or sixe of hire meinic, 10705
And in a trenche forth in the park goth she.

The vapour which that fro the erthe glode
Maketh the sonne to seme rody and brode;
But natheles it was so faire a sight
That it made all hir hertes for to light, 10710
What for the seson and the morwening,
And for the foules that she herde sing,

For right anon she wiste what they ment
Right by hir song, and knew al hir entent.

The knotte why that every tale is tolde,
If it be taried til the lust be colde
Of hem that han it herkened after yore,
The favour passeth ever lenger the more
For fulsumnesse of the prolixitee;
And by that same reson thinketh me
I shuld unto the knotte condescende,
And maken of hire walking sone an ende.

Amidde a tree for-dry, as white as chalk,
As Canace was playing in hire walk,
Ther sat a faucon over hire hed ful hie
That with a pitous vois so gan to crie,
That all the wood resounded of hire cry,
And beten had hireself so pitoufly
With both hire winges til the rede blood
Ran endelong the tree ther as she stood;
And ever in on alway she cried and shrighit,
And with hire bek hireselven she so twight,
That ther n'is tigre ne no cruel best
That dwelleth other in wood or in forest
That n'olde han wept, if that he wepen coude,
For sorwe of hire, she shrighit alway so loude.

For ther was never yet no man on live,
If that he coude a faucon wel describe,
That herde of swiche another of fayrenesse
As wel of plumage as of gentileste

Of shape, of all that might yrekened be:
 A faucon peregrine femed she
 Of fremde lond, and ever as she stood
 She swouned now and now for lack of blood,
 Til wel neigh is she fallen fro the tree. 10745

This faire kinges doughter Canace,
 That on hire finger bare the queinte ring,
 Thurgh which she understood wel every thing
 That any foule may in his leden sain,
 And coude answere him in his leden again, 10750
 Hath understonden what this faucon scyd,
 And wel neigh for the routhe almost she deyd;
 And to the tree she goth ful hastily,
 And on this faucon loketh pitously,
 And held hire lap abroad, for wel she wist 10755
 The faucon muste fallen from the twist
 Whan that she swouned next, for faute of blood.
 A longe while to waiten hire she stood,
 Til at the last she spake in this manere
 Unto the hawk, as ye shul after here: 10760

✧. 10742. *A faucon peregrine*] This species of falcon is thus described in the *Treſor de Brunet Latin*, P. 1, *Cb. Des faucons*, ms. Reg. 19 C. X.; "La seconde lignie est *faucons*, que hom apele *pelerins*, par ce que nus ne trove son nl. ains est pris autresi come en *pelerinage*. et est mult legiers a norrir, et mult cortois, et vaillans, et de bone maniere." Chaucer adds, that this falcon was of *fremde* or *fremed lond*, from a foreign country.

✧. 10749. *leden*] *Language*, Sax. a corruption of Latin. Dante uses *Latino* in the same sense, *Canz.* 1;

E cantine gli augelli
 Ciascuno in suo *Latino*.

What is the cause, if it be for to tell,
 That ye ben in this furial peine of hell?
 Quod Canace unto this hauk above;
 Is this for forwe of deth or losse of love?
 For as I trow thise be the causes two 10765
 That causen most a gentil herte wo.
 Of other harme it nedeth not to speke,
 For ye yourself upon yourself awreke,
 Which preveth wel that other ire or drede
 More ben encheson of your cruel dede, 10770
 Sin that I se non other wight you chace.
 For the love of God as doth yourselven grace;
 Or what may be your helpe? for west ne est
 Ne saw I never er now no brid ne best
 That ferde with himself so pitoufly. 10775
 Ye fle me with your forwe veraily,
 I have of you so gret compassioun.
 For Goddes love come fro the tree adoun,
 And as I am a kinges doughter trewe,
 If that I veraily the causes knewe 10780
 Of your disese, if it lay in my might
 I wold amend it or that it were night,
 As wisly help me the gret God of kind;
 And herbes shal I right ynough yfind
 To helen with your hurtes hastily. 10785
 Tho shright this faucon yet more pitoufly
 Than ever she did, and fell to ground anon,
 And lith aswoun as ded as lith a ston,

Til Canace hath in hire lappe hire take
 Unto that time she gas of swoone awake, 10790
 And after that she out of swoone abraide
 Right in hire haukes leden thus she sayde :

That pitce renneth sone in gentil herte
 (Feling his similitude in peines smerte)
 Is proved alle day, as men may see 10795

As wel by werke as by auctoritee,
 For gentil herte kitheth gentilleffe.
 I see wel that ye have on my distresse
 Compassion, my faire Canace,
 Of veray womanly benignitee 10800

That Nature in your principles hath set.
 But for non hope for to fare the bet,
 But for to obey unto your herte free,
 And for to maken other yware by me,
 As by the whelp chastised is the leon, 10805

Right for that cause and that conclusion,
 While that I have a leiser and a space,
 Min harme I wol confessen er I pace.
 And ever while that on hire sorwe told
 That other wept as she to water wold, 10810
 Til that the faucon bad hire to be still,
 And with a like right thus she said hire till :

Ther I was bred (alas that ilke day !)
 And fostred in a roche of marble gray
 So tendrely, that nothing ailed me ; 10815
 I ne wist not what was aduersitee

Til I coud flee ful high under the skie.

Tho dwelled a tercelet me false by
That semed welles of alle gentilleſſe,
Al were he ful of tresoun and falseneſſe. 10820

It was so wrapped under humble chere,
And under hew of trouth in swiche manere,
Under plesance, and under besy peine,
That no wight coud have wend he coude feine,
So depe in greyn he died his coloures. 10825

Right as a serpent hideth him under floures,
Til he may see his time for to bite,
Right so this god of Loves hypocrite
Doth so his ceremonies and obeisance,
And kepeth in semblaunt alle his observance 10830

That souneth unto gentilleſſe of love.
As on a tombe is all the faire above,
And under is the corps, swiche as ye wote,
Swiche was this hypocrite both cold and hote,
And in this wise he served his entent, 10835

That save the fend non wiste what he ment;
Til he so long had weped and complained,
And many a yere his service to me fained,
Till that min herte, to pitous and to nice,
Al innocent of his crowned malice, 10840

†. 10840. *crowned malice*] The reader of taste will not be displeased, I trust, at my having received this reading upon the authority of ms. *A.* only: the common reading is *cruel*.

For-fered of his deth, as thoughte me,
 Upon his othes and his seuretee
 Graunted him love on this conditionn,
 That evermo min honour and renoun
 Were saved, both privee and apert; 10845
 This is to say, that after his desert
 I gave him all min herte and all my thought,
 (God wote and he that other wayes nought)
 And toke his herte in chaunge of min for ay.
 But soth is said, gon sithen is many a day 10850
 A trewe wight and a theef thinken not on.

And whan he saw the thing so fer ygon,
 That I had granted him fully my love;
 In swiche a guise as I have said above,
 And yeven him my trewe herte as free 10855
 As he swore that he gaf his herte to me,
 Anon this tigre, ful of doublenesse,
 Fell on his knees with so gret humbleffe,
 With so high reverence, as by his chere,
 So like a gentil lover of manere, 20860
 So ravished, as it semed, for the joye,
 That never Jason ne Paris of Troye,
 Jason! certes ne never other man
 Sin Lamech was, that alderfirst began
 To loven two, as writen folk beforne, 10865
 Ne never sithen the first man was borne,
 Ne coude man by twenty thousand part
 Contrefete the sophimes of his art,

Ne were worthy to unboole his galoche,
 Ther doublenesse of faining shuld approche, 10870
 Ne coude so thanke a wight as he did mo.
 His maner was an heven for to see
 To any woman, were she never so wise,
 So painted he and kenpt at point devise
 As wel his wordes as his contenance : 10875
 And I so loved him for his obeisance,
 And for the trouthe I demed in his herte,
 That if so were that any thing him smerte,
 Al were it never so lite, and I it wist,
 Me thought I felt deth at myn herte twist. 10880
 And, shortly, so ferforth this thing is went,
 That my will was his willes instrument;
 This is to say, my will obeied his will
 In alle thing, as fer as reson fill,
 Keping the boundes of my worship ever : 10885
 Ne never had I thing so lese ne lever
 As him, God wot, ne never shal no mo.

This lasteth lenger than a yere or two,
 That I supposed of him nought but good :
 But, finally, thus at the last it stood, 1089
 That Fortune wolde that he muste twin
 Out of that place which that I was in.
 What me was wo it is no question ;
 I cannot make of it description :
 For o thing dare I tellen boldely, 1090
 I know what is the peine of deth therby,

Swiche harme I felt, for he ne might byleve.

So on a day of me he toke his leve,

So forweful eke, that I wend veraily

That he had felt as mochel harme as I, 10900

Whan that I herd him speke and saw his hewe:

But natheles I thought he was so trewe,

And eke that he repairen shuld again

Within a litel while, soth for to fain,

And reson wold eke that he muste go 10905

For his honour, as often happeth so,

That I made vertue of necessitye,

And toke it wel sin that it muste be.

As I best might I hid fro him my sorwe,

And toke him by the hond, Seint John to borwe,

And said him thus, Lo, I am youres all, 10911

Beth swiche as I have ben to you and shall.

What he answerd it nedeth not reherse;

Who can say bet than he, who can do werse?

Whan he hath al wel said than hath he done; 10915

Therefore behoveth him a ful long sponc

That shal ete with a fend; thus herd I say.

So at the last he muste forth his way;

And forth he fleeth, til he come thur him lest.

Whan it came him to purpos for to rest, 10920

I trow that he had thilke text in mind,

That alle thing repairing to his kind

7. 10921. *thilke text*] *Boethius*, l. lii. met. 2;

Repetunt proprios quæque recursus,

Redituque suo singula gaudent—

Gladeth himself; thus fain men as I gesse:
 Men loven of propre kind newefangelnesse,
 As briddes don that men in cages fede; 10
 For though thou night and day take of hem hede
 And strew hir cage faire and soft as filke,
 And give hem sugre, hony, bred, and milke,
 Yet right anon as that his dore is up
 He with his feet wol spurnen down his cup, 10
 And to the wood he wol and wormes etc,
 So newefangel ben they of hir mote,
 And loven noveltees of propre kind;
 No gentilleffe of blood ne may hem bind.

So ferd this tercelet, alas the day! 10
 Though he were gentil borne, and fresh, and gay
 And goodly for to seen, and humble, and free.
 He saw upon a time a kite flee,
 And sodenly he loved this kite so
 That all his love is clene from me ago, 10
 And hath his trouthe falsed in this wise.
 Thus hath the kite my love in hire service,
 And I am lorn withouten remedy.

And with that word this faucon gan to cry,
 And swouneth eft in Canacees barme. 10
 Gret was the sorwe for that haukes harme

which our Author has thus translated; "All thynges
 "ayen to hir propre course, and all thynges rejoyse
 "retourninge agayne to hir nature." The comparison of
 bird is taken from the same place.

That Canace and all hire women made;
 They n'isten how they might the faucon glade:
 But Canace home bereth hire in hire lap,
 And softly in plastres gan hire wrap 10950
 Ther as she with hire bek had hurt hireselfe.

Now cannot Canace but herbes delve
 Out of the ground, and maken salves newe
 Of herbes precious and fine of hewe
 To helen with this hauk i fro day to night 10955
 She doth hire besynesse and all hire might.
 And by hire beddes hed she made a mew,
 And covered it with velouettes blew,
 In signe of trouth that is in woman sene,
 And all without the mew is peynted grene, 10960
 In which were peynted all thise false foules,
 As ben thise tidifes, tercelettes, and owles,
 And pies, on hem for to cry and chide,
 Right for despit were peynted hem beside.

✧. 10958. *velouettes blew*] Velvets, from the Fr. *velou*, *velouette*. See *Du Cange*, in v. *Villofa*, *Vel'uetum*.—I will just add, that as *blew* was the colour of truth, [See *C. L.* 248.] so *grene* belonged to inconstancy: hence in a *ballade upon an inconstant lady* [among Stowe's additions to Chaucer's Works, p. 551, ed. *Urr.*] the burthen is—

In *Rede* of *blew* thus may ye were al *grene*.

✧. 10962. *thise tidifes*] The *tidife* is mentioned as an inconstant bird in *The Leg. of G. W.* ver. 154;

As doth the *tidif* for newefangelnesse.

Skinner supposes it to be the titmouse; but he produces no authority for his supposition, nor have I any to oppose to it.

✧. 10963, 4.] Are transposed from the order in which they stand in all the editt. and mss. that I have seen. Some of the best

Thus lete I Canace hire hauk keping: IC
 I wol no more as now speke of hire ring,
 Til it come eft to purpos for to fain,
 How that this faucon gat hire love again
 Repentant, as the story telleth us,
 By mediation of Camballus, IC
 The kinges sone, of which that I you told;
 But hennesforth I wol my proceffe hold
 To speke of adventures and of batailles,
 That yet was never herd so gret mervailles.

First wol I tellen you of a Cambuscan, IC
 That in his time many a citee wan;
 And after wol I speke of Algarlif,
 How that he wan Theodora to his wif,
 For whom ful oft in gret peril he was,
 Ne had he ben holpen by the hors of bras; IC
 And after wol I speke of Camballo,
 That fought in listes with the brethren two

ms. however read—*And ples*—which rather countenance transposition. My only excuse for such a liberty must be, I cannot make any good sense of them in the common c. v. 10977, 8.] Are also transposed, but upon the authority of ms. A. C. 1, and I believe some others, though belittled of the certainty of the emendation I have omitted to take a note of their concurrence. Ed. Ca. 2, agrees with ms. According to the common arrangement old Camballus is to win Theodora to his wife, and we are not told what be the object of Algarlif's adventures.

v. 10981. of *Camballo*] Ms. A. reads *Cabalo*: but that is my only reason for suspecting a mistake in this name. It is

For Canace, er that he might hire winne,
 And ther I left I wol again beginne. 10984

* * * * *

clear from the context that the person here intended is (not a brother but) a lover of Canace;

Who fought in listes with *the brethren two*
 For Canace, or that he might hire winne.

The brethren two are obviously the two brethren of Canace, who have been mentioned above, *Algarsif* and *Camballo*. In msf. *Afk.* 1, 2, it is—*bir brethren two*, which would put the matter out of all doubt. *Camballo* could not fight with himself.—Again, if this *Camballo* be supposed to be the brother of Canace, and to fight in defence of her with some two brethren who might be suitors to her, (according to Spenser's fiction) he could not properly be said to *winne* his sister, when he only prevented others from winning her.—The outline therefore of the unfinished part of this Tale, according to my idea, is nearly this; the conclusion of the story of the faucon,

By mediation of *Camballus*,

with the help of the ring, the conquests of *Cambuscan*, the winning of *Theodora* by *Algarsif*, with the assistance of the horse of brass, and the marriage of Canace to some knight, who was first obliged to fight for her with her two brethren, a method of courtship very consonant to the spirit of ancient chivalry.

¶. 10984. *And ther I left*] After this verse, in msf. *C.* 1, and others, is the following note; "Here endeth The Squieres Tale" as meche as Chaucer made." The two lines which in the *oditt.* and some msf. are made to begin a third part are wanting in all the best msf.;

Apollo whirleth up his chare so hie
 Til that the god Mercurius housse the sie.

They certainly have not the least appearance of belonging to this place. I should guess that they were originally scribbled by some vacant reader in the blank space which is commonly left at the end of this Tale, and afterwards transcribed as Chaucer's by some copist of more diligence than sagacity.

CONTENTS.

The Wif of Bathes Prologue,
The Wif of Bathes Tale,
The Freres Prologue,
The Freres Tale,
The Sompnoures Prologue,
The Sompnoures Tale,
The Clerkes Prologue,
The Clerkes Tale,
The Marchantes Prologue,
The Marchantes Tale,
The Squieres Prologue,
The Squieres Tale,

From the APOLLO PRESS,
by the MARTINS,
Oct. 19. 1782.

END OF VOLUME THIRD.

THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
GEOFF. CHAUCER.

IN FOURTEEN VOLUMES.

THE MISCELLANEOUS PIECES

From Urry's Edition 1721,

THE CANTERBURY TALES

From Tyrwhitt's Edition 1775.

Grete well CHAUCER whan ye mete----

Of ditees and of fonges glade,

The which he----made,

The londe fullfilled is over all.

GOWER.

My maister CHAUCER----chiefe poete of Bretayne----

Whom all this londe schulde of ryght preferre,

Sith of our langage he was the lode-kerre----

That made first to dystyle and rayne

The gold dewe dropys of speche and eloquence

Into our tonge thurgh his excellence.

LYDGATE.

The honour of English tong is dede----

My mayster CHAUCER, floure of eloquence,

Mirroure of fructuous entendement,

Univerſel ſadur in ſcience----

This londeis verray treſour and richeſſe----

The firſte funder of our ſayre langage.

OCCLEVE.

Venerabill CHAUCER, principall poete but pere,

Hevinly trumpet, orlece and regulere,

In eloquence balme, condict and diall,

Mylk; fountane, clere ſtrand, and rois riall,

Of freſche endite throw Albioun iland braid.

DOUGLAS.

O reverend CHAUCER! roſe of rethouris all,

As in oure tounge flour imperiall

That raiſe in Brittain evir, quha reidis right

Thou beiris of Makers the triumphs rovall,

The freſche enamill termes celeſtiall:

This mater couth half illuminit full bright,

Was thou nocht, of our Inglis all the light,

Surmounting every tounge terrettriall

As far as Mavis morrow dois midnichte.

DUNBAR.

VOL. IV.

EDINBURG:

AT THE Apollo Press, BY THE MARTINS.

June 1782.



THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
GEOFFREY CHAUCER.
VOL. IV.

CONTAINING HIS
CANTERBURY TALES, viz.

THE FRANKLEINES TALE, THE DOCTOURES TALE, THE PARDONERES TALE, THE SHIPMANNES TALE,	THE PRIORESSES TALE, THE RIME OF SIRE THOPAS, THE TALE OF MELIBEUS, THE MONKES TALE, <i>&c. &c. &c.</i>
--	---

But natheles certain
 I can right now no thrifty Tale sain,
 But CHAUCER, (though he can but lewedly
 On metres and on riming craftily)
 Hath sayd hem in swiche English as he can
 Of olde time, as knoweth many a man;
 And if he have not sayd hem, leve brother,
 In o book, he hath sayd hem in another----
 Who so that wol his large Volume seke. TALES, ver. 4463.
 Dan CHAUCER, well of English undefil'd,
 On Fame's eternal bead-roll worthy to be fil'd----
 Old Dan Geoffrey, in whose gentle spright
 The pure well-head of poetry did dwell----
 He whilst he lived was the soveraigne head
 Of shepherds all-----

SPENSER

Old CHAUCER, like the morning star,
 To us discovers day from far;
 His light these mists and clouds dissolv'd
 Which our dark nation long involv'd;
 But he descending to the shades
 Darknes again the age invades.

DENHAM

CHAUCER, him who first with harmony inform'd
 The language of our fathers---His legends blithe
 He sang of love or knighthood, or the wiles
 Of homely life, thro' each estate and age
 The fashions and the follies of the world
 With cunning hand portraying----
 Him who in times-----

Dark and untaught began with charming verse
 To tame the rudeness of his native land.

AKENSIDE

EDINBURG:

AT THE Apollo Press, BY THE MARINS.

Anno 1782.



THE CANTERBURY TALES.

THE FRANKLEINES PROLOGUE.

IN faith, Squier, thou hast thee wel yquit, 10985
And gentilly : I preise wel thy wit,
Quod the Frankleyn. Considering thin youthe
So felingly thou spekest, Sire, I aloue the
As to my dome ther is non that is here
Of eloquence that shal be thy pere 10990
If that thou live : God yeve thee goode chance,
And in vertue send thee continuance,
For of thy speking I have gret deintee.
I have a sone, and by the Trinite 10994
It were me lever than twenty pound worth lond,
Though it right now were fallen in my hond,
He were a man of swiche discretion
As that ye ben. Fie on possession
But if a man be vertuous withal !
I have my sone snibbed and yet shal, 11000
For he to vertue listeth not to entend,
But for to play at dis and to dispend,

✱. 10985. *In faith, Squier*] The authorities for giving this Prologue to 'The Frankleyn, and for placing his Tale next to 'The Squieres, are mss. *A. Ash.* 1, 2, *HA. Bod.* α. γ. In ms. *C.* 1, there is a blank of near two pages at the end of 'The Squieres Tale, but 'The Frankleyn's Tale follows, beginning at ver. 11066. This arrangement is also supported by ed. *Ca.* 2. For the rest see the *Discourse*, &c. § 25.

And lese all that he hath, is his usage ;
 And he had lever talken with a page
 Than to commune with any gentil wight 11005
 Ther he might leren gentilleſſe aright.

Straw for your gentilleſſe ! quod our Hoſte.
 What ? Frankleyn, parde, Sire, wel thou woſt
 That eche of you mote tellen at the leſt
 A Tale or two, or breken his beheſt. 11010

That know I wel, Sire, quod the Frankleyn :
 I pray you haveth me not in diſdeyn
 Though I to this man ſpeke a word or two.

Tell on thy Tale withouten wordes mo.

Gladly, Sire Hoſte, quod he, I wol obey 11015
 Unto your will : now herkeneth what I ſey :
 I wol you not contrarien in no wiſe,
 As ſer as that my wittes may ſuffice.

I pray to God that it may pleaſen you,
 Than wot I wel that it is good ynow. 11020

Thiſe olde gentil Bretons in hir dayes
 Of diſerſe adventures maden layes

¶. 11021. *Thiſe olde gentil Bretons*] Of the collection of Britiſh
 lays by Marie ſomething has been ſaid in the *Diſcourſe*, &c.
 n. 24. I will here only quote a few paſſages from that col-
 lection, to ſhew how exactly Chaucer and the agree in their man-
 ner of ſpeaking of the Armorican bards. The lay of Elidus con-
 cludes thus, mſ. *Harl.* 978, fol. 151 ;

De l'aventure de ces treis
 Li auntien Bretun .urteis
 Firent li lai pur remembrer,
 Qe hum nel deust pas oblir.

Rimeyed in hir firſte Breton tonge,
 Which layes with hir instruments they ſonge,
 Or elles redden hem for hir pleaſance, 11025
 And on of hem have I in remembrance,

The lay of Guiguemar thus, fol. 146 ;

De ceſt cunte, ke oi avez,
 Fu Guiguemar le lai trovez,
 Q'hum ſalt *en harpe e en role*,
 Dont eſt a oir la note.

The lay of Chevrefoil begins fol. 175 ;

Aſez me pleaſt, e bien le voil,
 Du lai qe hum nome chevrefoil
 Q'la verite vus encunt,
 Pur quœ il fu ſet e dunt.
 Plusurs le me unt cunte e dit,
 E jœ l'ai trove *en eſcrit*,
 De Friſtram e de la reine,
 De lur amur qui tant fu ſue,
 Dunt il eurent meinte dolum,
 Puis mururent en un jur.

In one particular Chaucer goes further (as I remember) than Marie, when he ſays that theſe lays were

Rimeyed in hir firſte Breton tonge—

if *rimeyed* be underſtood to mean written in rhyme, but it may very well ſignify only verſified. Indeed the editor of the *Dictionnaire de la Langue Bretonne*, by Dom Pelletier, ſeems to doubt whether the Armorican language be capable of any ſort of poetical harmony ; “ Nous ne voyons pas que nos Bretons Armoricaïns ayent cultivée la poëſie ; et la langue telle qu'ils la parlent, ne paroît pas pouvoir ſe plier à la meſure, à la douceur et à la harmonie des vers.” *Pref.* p. ix. A ſtrange doubt in him, who might have found in the dictionary which he has publiſhed quotations from two Armorican poems, viz. *Les Prophetes de Gwinglaſſ*, and *La Deſtruction de Jeruſalem*, both in rhyme. See *Arabat. Bagat.* And he himſelf ſpeaks, in the ſame preface, p. viii. of “ La vie de S. Gwenolê, premier Abbé de Landevenec, écrite en vers.” The oldeſt inf. however now known in the language (according to his account) is that containing *Les Prophetes de Gwinglaſſ*, written in 1450.

Which I shal sayp with good wille as I can.

But, Sires, because I am a borel man,
 At my beginning first I you besече ·
 Have me excused of my rude speche : 11030
 I lerned never rhetorike certain;
 Thing that I speke it mote be bare and plain :
 I slept never on the Mount of Pernafo,
 Ne lerned Marcus Tullius Cicero.
 Colours ne know I non, withouten drede, 11035
 But swiche colours as growen in the mede,
 Or elles swiche as men die with or peinte;
 Colours of rhetorike ben to me quainte;
 My spirit felcth not of swiche matere :
 But if you lust my Tale shul ye here. 11040

THE FRANKLEINES TALE.

In Armorike, that called is Bretaigne,
 Ther was a knight that loved and did his peine
 To serve a ladie in his beste wife,
 And many a labour, many a gret emprise,
 He for his lady wrought or she were wonne, 11045
 For she was on the fairest under sonne,
 And eke therto comen of so high kinrede
 That wel unnethes durst this knight for drede

The Frankleines Tale] Aurelius, after much labour and cost bestowed to win the love of Dorigen, another man's wife, is content in the end, through the good dealing of her and her husband, to lose both his labour and cost. The scope of this Tale seemeth to be a contention of courtesy. *Urry.*

Tell hirt his wo, his peine, and his distresse :
 But at the last she for his worthinesse, 11050
 And namely for his meke obeyfance,
 Hath swiche a pitee caught of his penance,
 That prively she fell of his accord
 To take him for hire husbond and hire lord,
 (Of swiche lordshipas men han over hir wives) 11055
 And, for to lede the more in blisse hir lives,
 Of his free will he swore hire as a knight
 That never in all his lif he day ne night
 Ne shulde take upon him no maistrie
 Agains hire will, ne kithe hire jaloufie, 11060
 But hire obey, and folwe hire will in al,
 As any lover to his lady shal,
 Save that the name of foverainetee,
 That wold he han for shame of his degree.
 She thonked him, and with ful gret humbleffe 11065
 She saide, Sire, sin of your gentilleffe
 Ye profren me to have so large a reine,
 Ne wolde God never betwix us tweine,
 As in my gilt, were either werre or strif :
 Sire, I wol be your humble trewe wif, 11070
 Have here my trowth, till that myn herte breste.
 Thus ben they both in quiete and in reste.
 For o thing, Sires, fauflly dare I seie,
 That frendes everich other must obeie,
 If they wol longe holden compaignie : 11075
 Love wol not be constreined by maistrie :

Whan maistrie cometh the god of Love anon
Beteth his winges, and, farewel, he is gon.

Love is a thing as any spirit free.

Women of kind desiren libertee, 11080

And not to be constrained as a thral;

And so don men, if sothly I say shal.

Loke, who that is most patient in love

He is at his advantage all above.

Patience is an high vertue certain, 11085

For it venquisheth, as thise clerkes fain,

Things that rigour never shakde atteine.

For every word men may not chide or pleine.

Lerneth to suffren, or, so mote I gon,

Ye shul it lerne whether ye wol or non; 11090

For in this world certain no wight ther is

That he ne doth or sayth somtime amis.

Ire, siknesse, or constellation,

Win, wo, or changing of complexion,

Causeth ful oft to don amis or speken: 11095

On every wrong a man may not be wreken.

After the time must be temperaunce

To every wight that can of governance:

And therefore hath this worthy wise knight

(To liven in cse) suffraunce hire behight, 11100

And she to him ful wisly gap to swere

That never shuld ther be defaute in here.

Here may men seen an humble wife accord;

Thus hath she take hire servant and hire lord,

Servant in love and lord in mariage. 11109

Than was he both in lordship and servage ?

Servage ! nay, but in lordship al above,

Sin he hath both his lady and his love ;

His lady certes, and his wif also,

'The which that law of love accordeth to. 11110

And whan he was in this prosperitee

Home with his wif he goth to his contree,

Not fer fro Penmark, ther his dwelling was,

Wher as he liveth in blisse and in solas.

Who coude tell, but he had wedded be, 11111

The joye, the ese, and the prosperitee,

That is betwix an hufbond and his wif ?

A yere and more lasteth this blisful lif,

Til that this knight, of which I spake of thus,

That of Cairrud was cleped Arviragus, 11112

Shope him to gon and dwelle a yere or twaine

In Englelond, that cleped was eke Bretaigne,

✧. 11113. *Not fer fro Penmark*] The best mss. have blundered in this name; they write it *Penmark*; but mss. *Bod. a. e.* and ed. *Ca. 2*, have it right—*Penmark*. The later editt. have changed it ridiculously enough into *Denmark*.—*Penmark* is placed in the maps upon the western coast of Bretagne, between Brest and Port L'Orient. Walsingham mentions a descent of the English in 1403, *apud Penarch*, (*r. Penmarch*) p. 369. See *Lo-bineau, H. de Bret.* t. 1. p. 503. In the same history *de Penmarc* occurs very frequently as a family name. The etymology of the word, from *pen* (*caput, mons*) and *mark* (*limes, regio*) is evidently British.

✧. 11120. *Cairrud*] This word is also of British original, signifying the red city, as *cair guent* in this island signified the white city. Arviragus is a known British name from the time of Juvenal.

And eke Arviragus, in all this care,
 Hath sent his lettres home of his welfare, 11150
 And that he wol come hastily again,
 Or elles had this sorwe hire herte slain.

Hire frendes saw hire sorwe gan to flake,
 And preiden hire on knees, for Goddes sake,
 To come and romen in hir compaignie, 11155
 Away to driven hire darke fantasie :
 And, finally, she granted that request,
 For wel she saw that it was for the best.

Now stood hire castel faste by the see,
 And often with hire frendes walked she, 11160
 Hire to disporten on the bank an hie,
 Wher as she many a ship and barge sie
 Sailing hir cours wher as hem list to go :
 But than was that a parcel of hire wo,
 For to hireself ful oft, alas! said she, 11165
 Is ther no ship, of so many as I see,
 Wol bringen home my lord? than were my herte
 Al warished of his bitter peines smerte.

Another time wold she sit and thinke,
 And cast hire eyen downward fro the brinke; 11170
 But whan she saw the grisly rockes blake,
 For veray fere so wold hire herte quake
 That on hire feet she might hire not sustene :
 Than wold she sit adoun upon the grune,
 And pitoussly into the see behold, 11175
 And say right thus, with careful likes cold :

Eterne God! that thurgh thy purveance
Ledest this world by certain governance,
In idel, as men sain, ye nothing make:
But, Lord! thise grisly fendly rockes blake
That semen rather a foule confusion
Of werk than any faire creation
Of swiche a parfit wise God and siable,
Why han ye wrought this werk unresonab
For by this werk north, south, ne west, ne e
Ther n'is yfollred man, ne brid, ne best:
It doth no good to my wit, but anoyeth.
See ye not, Lord! how mankind it destroy
An hundred thousand bodies of mankind
Han rockes slain. al be they not in mind,
Which mankind is so faire part of thy we
Thou madest it like to thyn owen merk.
Than, semeth it, ye had a gret chertee
Toward mankind: but how than may it b
That ye swiche menes make it to destroye
Which menes don no good, but ever anoy
I wote wel clerkes wol sain as hem lest,
By arguments, that all is for the best,
Though I ne can the causes nought yknow
But thilke God that made the wind to blo
As kepe my lord; this is my conclusion;
To clerkes lete I all disputison:
But wolde God that all thise rockes blake
Were senken into helle for his sake:

Thise rockes flee min herte for the fere. II 205
 Thus wold she say with many a pitous tere.
 Hire frendes saw that it was no disport
 To romen by the see, but discomfort,
 And shape hem for to plaien somwher elles.
 They leden hire by rivers and by welles, II 210
 And eke in other places delitable;
 They dancen, and they play at ches and tables.
 So on a day, right in the morwe tide,
 Unto a gardin that was ther beside,
 In which that they had made hir ordinance II 215
 Of vitaille and of other purveance,
 They gon and plaie hem all the longe day;
 And this was on the fixte morwe of May,
 Which May had peinted with his softe shoures
 This garden ful of leves and of floures: II 220
 And craft of mannes hond so curiously
 Arrayed had this gardin trewely,
 That never was ther gardin of swiche pris,
 But if it were the veray Paradis.
 The odour of floures and the freshe sight II 225
 Wold han ymaked any herte light
 That ever was born, but if to gret sikenesse
 Or to gret forwe held it in distresse,
 So ful it was of beautee and plesance.
 And after dinner gonnen they to dance II 230
 And sing also, sauf Dorigene alone,
 Which made alway hire complaint and hire mone,

For she ne saw him on the dance go
 That was hire husband and hire love also:
 But nathelès she must a time abide, 11235
 And with good hope let hire forwe slide.

Upon this dance, amonges other men,
 Danced a squier before Dorigen
 That fresher was and jolier of array,
 As to my dome, than is the month of May. 11240
 He singeth, danceth, passing any man
 That is or was sin that the world began;
 Therewith he was, if men shuld him discribe,
 On of the beste faring men on live;
 Yong, strong, and vertuons, and riche, and wise,
 And wel beloved, and holden in gret prise. 11246
 And, shortly, if the soth I tellen shal,
 Unweting of this Dorigene at al,
 This lusty squier, servant to Venus,
 Which that ycleped was Aurelius, 11250
 Had loved hire best of any creature
 Two yere and more, as was his aventure,
 But never dorst he tell hire his grevance:
 Withouten cup he dranke all his penance.

✧. 11250. *Aurelius*] This name, though of Roman original, was common, we may presume, among the Britons. One of the princes mentioned by Gildas was called Aurelius Conanus; another British king is named Aurelius Ambrosius by Geoffrey of Monmouth. It may be remarked of this last author, that although he has not paid the least regard to truth in his narration of facts he has been very attentive to probability in his names both of persons and places.

He was dispeired ; nothing dorst he say, 11255
 Sauf in his songes somwhat wold he wray
 His wo, as in a general complaining ;
 He said he loved and was beloved nothing.
 Of swiche matere made he many layes,
 Songes, complaintes, roundels, virelayes ; 11260
 How that he dorste not his forwe telle,
 But languisheth as doth a Furie in helle ;
 And die he must, he said, as did Ecco
 For Narcissus, that dorst not tell hire wo.

In other maner than ye here me say 11265
 Ne dorst he not to hire his wo bewray,
 Sauf that paraventure somtime at dances,
 Ther yonge folk kepen hir observances,
 It may wel be he loked on hire face
 In swiche a wise as man that axeth grace ; 11270
 But nothing wiste she of his entent.
 Natheles it happed or they thennes went,
 Because that he was hire neighebour,
 And was a man of worship and honour,
 And had yknowen him of time yore, 11275
 They fell in speche, and forth ay more and more
 Unto his purpos drow Aurelius,
 And whan he saw his time he saide thus :

†. 11262. *as doth a Furie in helle*] It is a *fire*, in mss. C. 1,
A/k. 1. 2, *HA.* which perhaps ought to have been followed,
 though I cannot say that I well understand either of the read-
 ings. *Fury* and *Fayr* have been confounded before, ver. 2686.

Madame, quod he, by God that this world ma
So that I wist it might your herte glade,
I wold that day that your Arviragus
Went over see that I Aurelius.
Had went ther I shuld never come again,
For wel I wot my service is in vain;
My guerdon n'is but bressing of min herte.
Madame, rueth upon my peines smerte,
For with a word ye may me fleen or save.
Here at your feet God wold that I were grave
I ne have as now no leiser more to sey:
Have mercy, swete! or ye wol do me dey.

She gau to loke upon Aurelius:

Is this your will, (quod she) and say ye thus?
Never erst (quod she) ne wist I what ye ment,
But now, Aurelie, I know your entent.
By thilke God that yaf me soule and lif
Ne shal I never ben an untrew e wif
In word ne werk, as fer as I have wit;
I wol ben his to whom that I am knit:
Take this for final answer as of me.
But after that in play thus saide she:

Aurelie, (quod she) by high God above
Yet wol I granten you to ben your love,
(Sin I you see so pitoussly complaine.)
Loke, what day that endelong Bretaigue
Ye remue all the rockes ston by ston,
That they ne letten ship ne boȝe to gon;

I say, whan he han made the cost so cleue
 Of rockes that ther n'is no ston ysene,
 Than wol I love you best of any man;
 Have here my trowth, in all that ever I can, 11310
 For wel I wote that it shal never betide.
 Let swiche folie out of your herte glide:
 What deintee shuld a man have in his lif
 For to go love another mannes wif
 That hath hire body whan that ever him liketh?

Aurelius ful often sore liketh: 11316
 Is ther non other grace in you? quod he.

No, by that Lord, quod she, that maketh me.
 Wo was Aurelie whan that he this herd,
 And with a forweful herte he thus answerd: 11320
 Madame, quod he, this were impossible;
 Than mooste I die of soden deth horrible.
 And with that word he turned him anon.

Tho come hire other frendes many on,
 And in the alleyes romed up and down, 11325
 And nothing wist of this conclusioun,
 But sodenly begonnen revel newe,
 Til that the brighte sonne had lost his hewe,
 For the orizont had rest the sonne his light,
 (This is as much to sayn as it was night) 11330
 And home they gon in mirthe and in solas,
 Sauþ only wrecche Aurelius, alas!

¶. 11317. *Is ther non other grace*] I have inserted these two lines in this place upon the authority of ms. A. supported by ms. E. Bod. 9. They have usually been placed after ver. 11310.

THE FRANKELINES TALE.

Ye knowe wel, Lord, that right as hire desire
Is to be quicked and lighted of your fire,
For which she solweth you ful befilly,
Right so the see desireth naturelly
To solwen hire, as she that is goddesse II
Both in the see and rivers more and lesse:
Wherefore, Lord Phebus! this is my request,
Do this miracle, or do min herte brest,
That now next at this opposition,
Which in the signe shal be of the Leon, II
As preyeth hire so gret a flood to bring,
That five fadome at the lest it overspring
The highest rock in Armorike Bretaigne,
And let this flood enduren yeres twaine;
Than certes to my lady may I say, II
Holdeth your hest, the rockes ben away.
Lord Phebus! this miracle doth for me,
Prey hire she go no faster cours than ye;
I say this, preyeth your suster that she go
No faster cours than ye thise yeres two, II
Than shal she ben even at ful alway,
And spring-flood lasten bothe night and day.
And but she vouchesauf in swiche manere
To graunten me my soveraine lady dere,
Prey hire to sinken every rock adoun I
Into hire owen derke regioun
Under the ground, ther Pluto dwelleth in,
Or nevermo shal I my lady win.

Lord Phebus!
And on my peine have thou
And with that word in forwe' he ten-
And longe time he lay forth in a trance.
His brother, which that knew of his penance,
Up caught him, and to bed he hath him brought. 11396
Dispeired in this turment and this thought
Let I this woful creature lie,
Chese he for me whether he wol live or die.
Arviragus with hele and gret honour
(As he that was of chevalrie the flour)
Is comen home, and other worthy men:
O, blisful art thou now thou Dorigen!
That hast thy lusty husbond in thin armes,
The freshe knight, the worthy man of armes
That loveth thee as his owen hertes lif.
Nothing list him to be imaginatif
Now wight had spoke while he was oute
Twiche matere,
II

Sauf of his brother, which that was a clerk :
 He knew of all this wo and all this werk ;
 For to non other creature certain
 Of this matere he dorste no word sain : 11420
 Under his brest he bare it more secree
 Than ever did Pamphilus for Galathee.
 His brest was hole withouten for to seen,
 But in his herte ay was the arwe kene,
 And wel ye knowe that of a surfanure 11425
 In surgerie is perilous the cure,
 But men might touch the arwe or come therby.

His brother wepeth and wailleth prively,
 Til at the last him fell in remembrance
 That while he was at Orleauce in France, 11430
 As yonge clerkes that ben likerous
 To reden artes that ben curious

‡. 11422. *Pamphilus for Galathee*] Mr. Urry, misled by his classical learning, has altered this most licentiously—

Than *Polyphemus* did for *Galathee*.

But the allusion is plainly to the first lines of a Latin poem which was very popular in the time of Chaucer, in which one *Pamphilus* gives a history of his amour with *Galatea*.—The poem begins thus, ms. *Cotton, Titus. A. xx.* ;

Liber Pamphili.

Vulneror et clausum porto sub pectore telum,

Crescit et assidue plaga dolorque mihi.

Et ferientis adhuc non audeo dicere nomen,

Nec sine aspectus plaga videre suos.

This poem by the name of *Pamphilus* is quoted in our Author's *Melibeus*. It is extant in ms. in many libraries, and it has also been printed more than once. *Leyser. Hist. Poet. Medii ævi*, p. 2071, (1171.) *Catal. Gaignat. n.* 2233, 2234.

Seken in every halke and every herne
 Particuler sciences for to lerne,
 He him remembred that upon a day II438
 At Orleauce in studie a book he say
 Of magike naturel, which his felaw
 That was that time a bachelor of law,
 Al were he ther to lerne another craft,
 Had prively upon his desk ylast; II440
 Which book spake moche of operations
 Touching the eight-and-twenty manfions
 That longen to the mone, and swiche folie
 As in our dayes n'is not worth a flie;
 For holy cherches feith, in our beleve, II443
 Ne suffreth non illufion us to greve.
 And whan this book was in his remembrance
 Anon for joye his herte gan to dance,
 And to himself he faied prively,
 My brother shal be warifhed haftily; II450
 For I am fiker that ther be sciences
 By which men maken divers apparences
 Swiche as thise subtil tregetoures play;
 For oft at festes have I wel herd say

V. II453. *tregetoures*] The profession of a jocolator or juggler was anciently very comprehensive, as appears from this passage of the *Breviari d'Amors*. [See the *Discourse*, &c. n. 25.]

Aluredi peccan li joglar,
 Que sabon cantar e balar,
 E sabon tocar estruments,
 O sabon encantar las gens,
 O ffar outra joglayria—

In the time of Chaucer the persons who exercised the first mentioned branches of the art were called generally Minstrels, and

That tregetours, within an halle large, 11455
Have made come in a water and a barge,

the name of jogelour was, in a manner, appropriated to those who by sleight of hand and machines produced such illusions of the senses as are usually supposed to be effected by enchantment. [See above, vers 7049.] This species of jogelour is here called a *tregetour*. They are joined together in company with magicians, *H. of F.* iii. 169;

Ther saw I playing jogelours,
Magiciens and tregetours,
And Philoneuses, charmeresses—
And clerkes eke, which coune wel
All this magike naturel.—

See also the following ver. 197—191. —If we compare the feats of the *tregetours*, as described in this passage, with those which are afterwards performed by the *clerkes magike* for the entertainment of his guests, [ver. 11501--11519,] we shall find them very similar, and they may both be illustrated by the following account which Sir John Mandeville has given of the exhibitions before the Grete Chan; "And than comen *jogulours* and *enchantours*, that don many marvaylles; for they maken to come in the ayr the sone and the mone, be seminge to every mannes sight: and after they maken the nyght so derk that no man may see no thing: and after they maken the day to come ayen fair and pleasant with bright sonne to every mannes sight: and than they bringen in daunces of the fairest damyelles of the world and richest arrayed: and after they maken to comen in other damyelles, bringinge coupes of gold fulle of mylk of dyverse bestes, and yeven drynke to lordes and to ladyes: and than they make knyghtes to jousten in armes fulle lustyly; and they rennen togidre a gret randoom, and they frusschen togidre fulle fiercely, and they breken hertes so rudely that the tronchouns fien in spotes and peeces alle aboute the halle: and than they make to come in huntynge for the hert and for the boor, with houndes renning with open mouth. And many other thinges they don be craft of hir enchauntementes, that it is marveyle for to see. And suche playes of desport they make til the taking

And in the halle rowen up and down ;
Somtime hath semed come a grim leoun,

"up of the boordes." *Mand. Trav.* p. 285, 6. See also p. 261 ;
"And wher it be by craft or by nygromancye I wot nere."—
The Glossary derives *tregetour* from the barb. Lat. *tricator*, but
the derivatives of that family are *tricheur*, *tricherie*, *trick*, &c.
Nor can I find the word *tregetour* in any language but our own.
It seems clearly to be formed from *treget*, which is frequently
used by Chaucer for *deceit*, *impyfure*, *R. R.* 6267, 6312, 6325 ;
and so is *tregetry*, *ibid.* 6374, 6382. From whence *treget* itself
may have been derived is more difficult to say, but I observe
that *trebuchet* (the French name for a military engine) is called
by Chaucer *trepeget*, *R. R.* 6270, and by Knighton, 2672, *trep-*
get; and that this same word *trebuchet*, in French, signified
also a machine for catching birds. *Du Cange*, in v. *Trepget* ;
"Hinc appellatio mansit apud nos instrumentis, aut machinu-
"re, suspensis et lapidibus, ad captandas aviculas. Has enim
"etiam *trebuchets* appellamus." *Maratori*, in his *Antiq.*
Ital. *Diff.* xxvi. p. 473, informs us that *trabocchetto* or
trabocchetto, in Italian, (which he explains to be the same as
trabuchet in French) signified also another instrument of fraud,
which he describes thus ; "Exculis Italiane turbatissimis—in usu
"fuere teterrima insidiarum loca, id est, in cubiculis pavimen-
"tum perforatum, ac lignea tabulâ (*Ribalt*) appellabantur ita
"caute coopertum, ut qui improvide alteram tabulæ partem
"pedibus premeret, cedente ipsâ in ima rueret." This was
clearly a species of trapdoor.—The reader will judge whe-
ther the *tregetour* may not possibly have been so called from
his frequent use of these insidious machines in his operations.
That a great deal of machinery was requisite to produce
the appearances or illusions enumerated by Chaucer in this pas-
sage is very certain ; but not long after the art of a *tregetour*
seems to have been reduced to that of a modern juggler, mere
trick of hand. In Lydgate's translation of *The Dance of Ma-*
cerior, *ms. Harl.* 116, he has introduced a *tregetour* speaking
thus ;

What may availle mankynde [*f. magik.*] naturale,
Or any craft shewed by apparence,
The life of feres above celestiale,
Of heven all the valience,

And somtime floures spring as in a mede,
 Somtime a vine, and grapes white and rede, 11460
 Somtime a castel al of lime and ston,
 And whan hem liketh voideth it anon :
 Thus semeth it to every mannes sight.

Now than conclude I thus; if that I might
 At Orleauce som olde felaw find 11465
 That hath thise mones mansions in mind,
 Or other magike naturel above,
 He shuld wel make my brother have his love;
 For with an apparence a clerk may make,
 To mannes sight, that all the rockes blake 11470
 Of Bretaigne were yvoided everich on,
 And shippes by the brinke comen and gon,
 And in swiche forme endure a day or two:
 Than were my brother warished of his wo,
 Than must she nedes holden hire beheft, 11475
 Or elles he shal shame hire at the left.

What shuld I make a lenger Tale of this?
 Unto his brothers bed he comen is,

Ayenst deth to stand at defence?
Lygards de wayne now helpith me right nought.
 Farewell my craft and all such sapience,
 For Deth hath more maleries than I have wrought.
 He has also the following speech of Death to a famous *tregetour*;
 Maister John Rykell, sometime *tregetour*
 Of noble Henri Kinge of Engleland,
 And of France the mighty conquerour,
 For all the sleighes and turnyng of thyne honde
 Thou must come nere this dance to understonde:
 Nought may avail all thy conclusions,
 For lieth shortly, nether on tee nor londe,
 Is not dysceyved by noon illusions.

And swiche comfort he gaf him for to gon
To Orleauce that he up ftert anon,
And on his way forthward than is he fare,
In hope for to ben lissed of his care.

Whan they were come almost to that citee,
But if it were a two furlong or thre,
A yonge clerk roming by himself they mette,
Which that in Latine thriftily hem grette :
And after that he sayd a wonder thing ;
I know, quod he, the cause of your coming :
And or they forther any foote went
He told hem all that was in hir entent.

This Breton clerk him axed of felawes
The which he had yknown in olds dawes,
And he answered him that they dede were,
For which he wept ful often many a tere.

Down of his hors Aurelius light anon,
And forth with this magicien is gon
Home to his hous, and made hem wel at ese :
Hem lacked no vitaille that might hem plesse.
So wel arraied hous as ther was on
Aurelius in his lif saw never non.

He shewed him, or they went to soupere,
Forrestes, parkes, ful of wilde dere :
Ther saw he hartes with kir hornes hie,
The grettest that were ever seen with eie :
He saw of hem an hundred slain with houndes
And som with arwes blede of bitter woundes :

He saw, when voided were the wilde dere,
 Thise fauconers upon a faire river;
 That with hir haukes han the heron slain.

Tho saw he knightes justen in a plain: 115 10
 And after this he did him swiche plesance,
 That he him shewed his lady on a dance,
 On which himselven danced, as him thought.
 And whan this maister, that this magike wrought,
 Saw it was time, he clapped his hondes two, 115 15
 And farewel, al the revel is ago!

And yet remued they never out of the hous,
 While they saw all thise fightes merveillous,
 But in his studie, ther his bookes be,
 They saten still, and no wight but they three. 115 20

To him this maister called his squier,
 And sayd him thus, May we go to souper?
 Almost an houre it is, I undertake,
 Sin I you bade our souper for to make,
 Whan that thise worthy men wenten with me 115 25
 Into my studie ther my bookes be.

Sire, quod this squier, whan it liketh you,
 It is al redy, though ye wol right now.

Go we than soupe, quod he, as for the best;
 Thise amorous folk somtime mooste han rest. 115 30

At after souper fell they in trectee
 What summe shuld this maisters guerdon be
 To remue all the rockes of Bretaigne,
 And eke from Gerounde to the mouth of Saine.

He made it strange, and swore, so God him save,
 Lesse than a thousand pound he wold not have,
 Ne gladly for that summe he wold not gon. 11537

Aurelius with blisful herte anon
 Answered thus; Fie on a thousand pound!
 'This wide world, which that men sayn is round,
 I wold it yeve, if I were lord of it. 11541

'This bargaine is ful drive, for we ben knit.
 Ye shul be paied trewely, by my trouth;
 But loketh, for non negligence or slouth
 Ye tarie us here no lenger than to morwe. 11545
 Nay, quod this clerk, have here my faith to borwe.'

To bed is gon Aurelius whan him lest,
 And wel nigh all that night he had his rest.
 What for his labour and his hope of blisse
 His woful herte of penance had a lisse. 11550

Upon the morwe whan that it was day
 To Bretaigne token they the righte way,
 Aurelie, and this magicien him beside,
 And ben descended ther they wold abide:
 And this was, as the bookes me remember, 11555
 The colde frosty seson of December.

Phebus waxe old and hewed like Laton,
 That in his hote declination
 Shone as the burned gold with stremes bright;
 But now in Capricorne adoun he light, 11560
 Wher as he shone ful pale, I dare wel sain.
 The bitter froste with the fleet and rain

Destroyed hath the grene in every yerd;
 Janus sit by the fire with double berd,
 And drinketh of his bugle horn the wine; . 11565
 Beforn him stant braune of the tusked swine,
 And Nowel crieth every lusty man.

Aurelius in all that ever he can
 Doth to his maister chere and reverence,
 And praieth him to don his diligence 11570
 'To bringen him out of his peines smerte,
 Or with a swerd that he wold slit his herte.

This sotil clerk swiche routh hath on this man,
 That night and day he spedeth him that he can
 'To wait a time of his conclusion; 11575
 This is to sayn, to make illusion,
 By swiche an apparence or joglerie,
 (I can no termes of astrologi e)
 That she and every wight shuld wene and say
 That of Bretaigne the rockes were away, 11580
 Or elles they were sonken under ground.
 So at the last he hath his time yfound
 To make his japes and his wretchednesse
 Of swiche a superstitious cursednesse.

✱. 11567. *And Nowelcrieth*] Noël, in French, is derived from *natalis*, and signified originally a cry of joy at Christmas, "Le jour natal de notre Seigneur." *Ménage*, in v. *Noël*. It was afterwards the usual cry of the people upon all occasions of joy and festivity. *Hist. de Charles VII. par Chartier*, p. 3, at the proclamation of H. VI. "Fut crié sur la fosse de son pere à haute voix, Vive le Roy Henry, Roy de France et d'Angleterre;" and "Avec cela fut crié Noël, des assistans, confortans lesdits Anglois."

His tables Toletanes forth he brought, 11585
 Ful wel corrected, that ther lacked nought,
 Nother his collect ne his expans yeres,
 Nother his rotes ne his other geres,
 As ben his centres and his argumentes,
 And his proportionel convenientes, 11590
 For his equations in every thing :
 And by his eighte speres in his werking
 He knew ful wel how fer Alnath was shove
 Fro the hed of thilke fix Aries above
 That in the ninthe spere considered is : 11595
 Ful sotilly he calculated all this.
 Whan he had found his firste mansion
 He knew the remenant by proportion,
 And knew the rising of his mone wel,
 And in whos face, and forme, and every del; 11600
 And knew ful wel the mones mansion
 Accordant to his operation ;
 And knew also his other observances,
 For swiche illusions and swiche meschances
 As Hethen folk used in thilke daies; 11605
 For which no lenger maketh he delaies,

v. 11585. *His tables Toletanes*] The astronomical tables composed by order of Alphonso X. King of Castile, about the middle of the 13th century, were called sometimes *Tabule Toletane*, from their being adapted to the city of Toledo. There is a very elegant copy of them in ms. *Hart.* 3647. I am not sufficiently skilled in the ancient astronomy to add any thing to the explanation of the following technical terms (drawn chiefly from those tables) which has been given in the addit. to Gloss. *U. r.*
 v. *Expans yeres*.

But thurgh his magike, for a day or tway,
It femed all the rockes were away.

Aurelius, which that despeired is
Whether he shal han his love or fare amis, 11610
Awaiteth night and day on this miracle;
And whan he knew that ther was non obstacle,
That voided were thise rockes everich on,
Doun to his maisters feet he fell anon,
And sayd, I, woful wretch Aurelius, 11615
'Thanke you, my lord, and lady min Venus,
That me han holpen fro my cares cold.
And to the temple his way forth hath he hold,
'Theras he knew he shuld his lady see;
And whan he saw his time anon right he 11620
With dredful herte and with ful humble chere
Salued hath his foveraine lady dere.

My rightful Lady, quod this woful man,
Whom I most drede and love as I best can,
And lothest were of all this world displese, 11625
N'ere it that I for you have swiche disese
'That I must die here at your foot anon,
Nought wold I tell how me is wo begon;
But certes other must I die or plaine;
Ye fle me giltles for veray peine : 11630
But of my deth though that ye han no routh
Aviseþ you or that you breke your trouth :
Repenteth you, for thilke God above,
Or ye me fle, because that I you love :

For, Madame, wel ye wote what ye have hight;
 Not that I chalenge any thing of right 11636
 Of you my soveraine Lady, but of grace;
 But in a gardin yond, in swiche a place,
 Ye wote right wel what ye behighten me,
 And in myn hond your trouthe pligheten ye 11640
 To love me best : God wote ye saied so,
 Although that I unworthy be therto.
 Madame, I speke it for the honour of you,
 More than to save my hertes lif right now,
 I have don so as ye commanded me, 11645
 And if ye vouchesauf ye may go see.
 Doth as you list, have your behest in mind,
 For quick or ded right ther ye shul me find.
 In you lith all to do me live or dey,
 But wel I wote the rockes ben away. 11650
 He taketh his leve, and she astonied stood;
 In all hire face n'as o drope of blood :
 She wened never han come in swiche a trappe.
 Alas! quod she, that ever this should happe!
 For wend I never by possibilittee 11655
 That swiche a monstre or mervaille might be :
 It is again the proceffe of Nature.
 And home she goth a sorweful creature;
 For veray fere unnethes may she go.
 She wepeth, waileth, all a day or two, 11660
 And swouneth that it routhe was to see,
 But why it was to no wight tolde she,

For out of toun was gon Arviragus;
 But to hireself she spake, and saied thus,
 With face pale, and with ful sory chere, 11665
 In hire complaint, as ye shul after here.
 . . . Alas! quod she, on thee, Fortune, I plain,
 That unaware hast me wrapped in thy chain,
 Fro which to escapen wote I no soccours
 Sauf only deth or elles dishonour: 11670
 On of thise two behoveth me to chese.
 But natheles, yet had I lever lese
 My lif than of my body have a shame,
 Or know myselven false, or lese my name:
 And with my deth I may be quit ywis; 11675
 Hath ther not many a noble wif or this,
 And many a mail, yslaine hireself, alas!
 Rather than with hire body don trespas?
 Yes certes; lo, thise stories bere witnesse.

When thirty tyrants ful of cursednesse 11680
 Had slain Phidon in Athens at the fest,
 They commanded his doughtren for to arrest
 And bringen hem beforne hem in despit
 Al naked, to fulfill hir foule delit;
 And in hir fadres blood they made hem dance 11685
 Upon the pavement, God yeve hem meschance!
 For which thise woful maidens, ful of drede,
 Rather than they wold lese hir maidenhede,
 They prively ben flet into a welle,
 And dreint hemselven, as the bookes telle. 11690

&c. 11679. *[The former here ending?]* They are all taken from
Hieronymus contra Iovinianum, l. i. c. 39.

For, Madame, wel ye wote what ye have hight;
 Not that I chalenge any thing of right II
 Of you my soveraine Lady, but of grace;
 But in a gardin yond, in swiche a place,
 Ye wote right wel what ye behighten me,
 And in myn hond your trouthe plighten ye II
 To love me best : God wote ye saied so,
 Although that I unworthy be therto.
 Madame, I speke it for the honour of you,
 More than to save my hertes lif right now,
 I have don so as ye commanded me, II
 And if ye vouchesafu ye may go see.
 Doth as you list, have your behest in mind,
 For quick or ded right ther ye shul me find.
 In you lith all to do me live or dey,
 But wel I wote the rockes ben away. II

He taketh his leve, and she astonied stood;
 In all hire face n'as o drope of blood :
 She wened never han come in swiche a trappe.

Alas! quod she, that ever this should happe!
 For wend I never by possibilittee II
 That swiche a monstre or mervaille might be :
 It is again the processe of Nature.
 And home she goth a forweful creature;
 For veray fere unnethes may she go.
 She wepeth, wailleth, all a day or two, II
 And swouneth that it routhe was to see,
 But why it was to no wight tolde she,

For out of toun was gon Arviragus;
 But to hireself she spake, and saied thus,
 With face pale, and with ful sory chere, 11665
 In hire complaint, as ye shul after here.

Alas! quod she, on thee, Fortune, I plain,
 That unware hast me wrapped in thy chain,
 Fro which to escapen wote I no soccours
 Sauþ only deth or elles dishonour: 11670

On of thise two behoveth me to chese.
 But natheles, yet had I lever lese
 My lif than of my body have a shame,
 Or know myselven false, or lese my name:

And with my deth I may be quit ywis; 11675
 Hath ther not many a noble wif or this,
 And many a mail, yslaine hireself, alas!
 Rather than with hire body don trespas?
 Yes certes; lo, thise stories bere witnesse.

Whan thirty tyrants ful of cursednesse 11680
 Had slain Phidon in Athens at the fest,
 They commanded his doughtren for to arrest
 And bringen hem beforne hem in despit
 Al naked, to fulfill hir foule delit;
 And in hir fadres blood they made hem dance 11685
 Upon the pavement, God yeve hem meschance!
 For which thise woful maidens, ful of drede,
 Rather than they wold lese hir maidenhede,
 They prively ben stert into a welle,
 And dreint hemselven, as the bookes telle. 11690

v. 11677. *thise stories bere witnesse*] They are all taken from
Hieronymus contra Iovinianum, l. i. c. 39.

They of Messene let enquire and seke
 Of Lacedonie fifty maidens eke
 On which they wolden dou hir lecherie;
 But ther was non of all that compaignie
 That she, n'as flaine, and with a glad entent 11695
 Chees rather for to dien than assent
 To ben oppressed of hire maidenhede.
 Why shuld I than to dien ben in drede?

Lo eke the tyrant Aristoclides,
 That loved a maid hight Stimphalides, 11700
 Whan that hire father flaine was on a night,
 Unto Dianas temple goth she right,
 And hente the image in hire handes two,
 Fro which image wold she never go;
 No wight her handes might of it arrace 11705
 Til she was flaine right in the selve place.

Now sin that maidens hadden swiche despit
 To be defouled with mannes foule delit,
 Wel ought a wif rather hireselfen fle
 Than be defouled, as it thinketh me. 11710

What shal I sayn of Hasdrubales wif,
 That at Cartage berast hireself hire lif?
 For whan she saw that Romans wan the toun
 She toke hire children all, and skipt adoun
 Into the fire, and chees rather to die 11715
 Than any Romain did hire vilanie.

Hath not Lucrece yflaine hireself, alas!
 At Rome, whan that she oppressed was

Of Tarquine? for hire thought it was a shame
To liven whan she hadde lost hire name. 11720

The seven maidens of Milefie also
Han slaine hemself, for veray drede and wo,
Rather than folk of Gaule hem shuld oppresse.

Mo than a thousand stories, as I gessle,
Coude I now tell as touching this matere. 11725

Whan Abradate was slain, his wif so dere
Hireselven flow, and let hire blood to glide
In Abradates woundes depe and wide,
And sayd, My body at the leste way
Ther shal no wight defoulen if I may. 11730

What shuld I mo ensamples hereof sain?
Sin that so many han hemselven slain,
Wel rather than they wold defouled be,
I wol conclude that it is bet for me
To fle myself than be defouled thus : 11735
I wol be trewe unto Arviragus,
Or elles fle myself in some manere,
As did Demotiones doughter dere,
Because she wolde not defouled be.

O Sedafus! it is ful gret pitee 11740
To reden how thy doughtren died, alas!
That flowe hemselven for swiche maner cas.

As gret a pitee was it, or wel more,
The Theban maiden that for Nichanore
Hireselven flow right for swiche manere wo. 11745
Another Theban mayden did right so,

For on of Macedoine had hire oppressed;
She with hire deth hire maidenhed redressed.

What shal I fain of Nicocrates wif,
That for swiche cas beraft hireself hire lif? 11750

How trewe was eke to Alcibiades
His love, that for to dien rather chees
Than for to suffre his body unburied be?

Lo, which a wif was Alceste eke? (quod she)
What sayth Homere of good Penelope? 11755
All Grece knoweth of hire chastitee.

Parde of Laodomia is written thus,
That whan at Troye was slain Prothefilaus
No lenger wolde she live after his day.

The same of noble Portia tell I may; 11760
Withouten Brutus conde she not live,
To whom she had all hol hire herte yeve.

The parfit wifhood of Artemisie
Honoured is thurghout all Barbarie.

O Teuta quene! thy wisly chastitee 11765
To alle wives may a mirroure be.

Thus plained Dorigene a day or twey,
Purposing ever that she wolde dey;
But natheles upon the thridde night
Home came Arviragus, the worthy knight, 11770

¶ 11766. *To alle wives*] After this verse the two following
are found in several mss.;

The same thing I say of Bilis,
Of Rhodogone and of Valeria—

but as they are wanting in mss. A. C. 1, A. 1, 2, H. 1. I w:
not unwilling to leave them out.

And axed hire why that she weep so sore?
 And she gan wepen ever longer the more.
 Alas, quod she, that ever I was yborne!
 Thus have I said, (quod she) thus have I sworne.
 And told him all, as ye have herd before: 11775
 It nedeth not reherse it you no more.

This husbond with glad chere, in frendly wise,
 Answerd and sayd as I shal you devise;
 Is ther ought elies, Dorigene, but this?

Nay, nay, quod she, God helpe me so, as wis 11780
 This is to much, and it were Goddes will.

Ye, wif, quod he, let slepen that is still;
 It may be wel paraventure yet to-day.
 Ye shal your trouthe holden by my fay;
 For God so wisly have mercy on me, 11785
 I had wel lever stiked for to be,
 For veray love which that I to you have,
 But if ye shuld your trouthe kepe and save:
 Trough is the hieft thing that man may kepe,
 But with that word he braut anon to wepe, 11790
 And sayd; I you forbede, on peine of deth,
 That never while you lasteth lif or breth
 To no wight tell ye this misaventure;
 As I may best I wol my wo endure:
 Ne make no contenance of hevinesse, 11795
 That folk of you may denien harme or gesse.
 And forth he cleped a squier and a maid.
 Goth forth anon with Dorigene, he said,

And bringeth hire to swiche a place anon.
 They take hir leve, and on hir way they gon : 11800
 But they ne wisten why she thider went ;
 She n'olde no wight tellen hire entent.

This squier which that highte Aurelius,
 On Dorigene that was so amorous,
 Of aventure happed hire to mete 11805
 Amid the toun, right in the quikkeſt ſtrete,
 As ſhe was boun to go the way forthright
 Toward the gardin, ther as ſhe had hight ;
 And he was to the gardinward alſo,
 For wel he ſpied whan ſhe wolde go 11810
 Out of hire hous to any maner place :
 But thus they met of aventure or grace,
 And he ſalueth hire with glad entent,
 And axeth of hire whiderward ſhe went.

And ſhe answered, half as ſhe were mad, 11815
 Unto the gardin, as myn huſbond bad,

ψ. 11802. *She n'olde*] After this verſe ed. Ca. 2, has the ſix following ;

Peraventure an hepe of you I wiſ
 Will holden him a loved man in this
 That he woll put his wife in jeopardy ;
 Herkneſth the Tale er ye upon him criſ.
 She may have better fortune than you ſemeth ;
 And whan that ye han heroe the Tale demeth.

Theſe lines are more in the ſtyle and manner of Chaucer than interpolations generally are, but as I do not remember to have found them in any mſ. I could not receive them into the text. I think, too, that if they were written by him he would probably upon more mature conſideration, have ſuppreſſed them, as unneceſſarily anticipating the catastrophe of the Tale.

ψ. 11807. *As ſhe was boun*] Ready : this old word is reſtored from mſ. A. *Aſh.* 1, 2. See P.L. p. 256, 291.

My trouthe for to hold, alas! alas!

Aurelius gan wondrep on thiscas,
 And in his herte had gret compassion
 Of hire, and of hire lamentation, 11820
 And of Arviragus, the worthy knight,
 That bad hire holden all that she had hight,
 So loth him was his wif shuld breke hire trouthe;
 And in his herte he caught of it gret routhe,
 Considring the best on every side, 11825
 That fro his lust yet were him lever abide
 Than do so high a cherlish wretchednesse
 Ageins fraunchise and alle gentilleffe;
 For which in fewe wordes sayd he thus:

Madame, say to your Lord Arviragus 11830
 That sin I see the grete gentilleffe
 Of him, and eke I see wel your distresse,
 That him were lever have shame (and that were routh)
 Than ye to me shuld breken thus your trouthe,
 I hadde wel lever ever to suffren wo 11835
 Than to depart the love betwix you two.
 I you relese, Madame; into your hond
 Quit every seurement and every bond
 That ye han made to me as herebefore
 Sin thilke time that ye were yborne. 11840
 Have here my trouthe, I shal you never reprove
 Of no behest; and here I take my leve
 As of the trewest and the beste wif
 That ever yet I knew in all my lif.

But every wif beware of hire behest; 11843
 On Dorigene remembreth at the lest.
 Thus can a squier don a gentil dede
 As wel as can a knight, withouten drede.

She thanketh him upon hire knees bare,
 And home unto hire husbond is she fare, 11850
 And told him all as ye han herd me sayd;
 And, trusteth me, he was so wel apayd
 That it were impossible me to write.

What shuld I lenger of this cas endite?
 Arviragus and Dorigene his wif 11855
 In foveraine blisse leden forth hir lif,
 Never eft ne was ther anger hem betwene;
 He cherished hire as though she were a queene,
 And she was to him trewe for evermore.
 Of thise two folk ye get of me no more. 11860

Aurelius, that his cost hath all forlorne,
 Curseth the time that ever he was borne.
 Alas! quod he, alas that I behight
 Of pured gold a thousand pound of wight
 Unto this philosophre! how shal I do?
 I see no more but that I am fordo.
 Min heritage mote I nedes sell,
 And ben a beggar here I n'ill not dwell,
 And shamen all my kinrede in this place,
 But I of him may geten better grace:
 But natheles I wol of him assay
 At certain daies yere by yere to pay,

THE FRANKLEINES TALE.

And thanke him of his grete curtesie.

My trouthe wol I kepe, I wol not lie.

With herte fore he goth unto his cofre,
And broughte gold unto this philosophre,
The value of five hundred pound I gesse,
And him besecheth of his gentilleffe
To graunt him daies of the remenaunt,
And sayde; Maister, I dare wel make avaunt
I failed never of my trouthe as yet;
For fikerly my dette shal be quit
Towardes you, how so that ever I fare
To gon a begging in my kirtle bare:
But wold ye vouchen sauf upon seurtee
Two yere or three for to respiten me,
Than were I wel, for elles mote I sell
Min heritage; ther is no more to tell.

This philbophre sobrely answerd,
And saied thus, whan he thise wordes herd;
Have I not holden covenant to thee?

Yes, certes, wel and trewely, quod he.
Hast thou not had thy lady as thee liketh?

No, no, quod he, and forwefully he siketh.
What was the cause? tell me if thou can.

Aurelius his tale anon began,
And told him all as ye han herd before;
It nedeth not reherse it any more.
He sayd, Arviragus of gentilleffe
Had lever die in sorwe and in distresse

Than that his wif were of hire trouthe fals.
 The forwe of Dorigene he told him als,
 How loth hire was to ben a wicked wif,
 And that she lever had lost that day hire lif;
 And that her trouth she swore thargh innocence;
 She never erst hadde herd speke of apparence: 11906
 That made me han of hire so gret pitee,
 And right as freely as he sent hire to me
 As freely sent I hire to him again.

This is all and som; ther n'is no more to fain. 11910

The philosophre answerd; Leve brother,
 Everich of you did gentilly to other:
 Thou art a squier, and he is a knight,
 But God forbede, for his blisful might,
 But if a clerk coud don a gentil dede 11915
 As wel as any of you, it is no drede.

Sire, I relese thee thy thousand pound,
 As thou right now were crope out of the ground,
 Ne never er now ne haddest knowen me:
 For, Sire, I wol not take a peny of thee 11920
 For all my craft, ne nought for my travaille:
 Thou hast ypaied wel for my vitaille.
 It is ynough, and farewel, have good day.
 And toke his hors, and forth he goth his way.

Lordings, this question wold I axen now, 11925
 Which was the moste free, as thinketh you?
 Now telleth me or that ye further wende.
 I can no more, my Tale is at an ende.

†. 11926. Which was the moste free] The same question is

THE DOCTOURES PROLOGUE.

YE, let that passen, quod our Hoste, as now.
 Sire Doctour of Physike, I prey you, 11930
 Tell us a Tale of som honest matere.
 It shal be don, if that ye wol it here,
 Said this Doctour, and his Tale began anon.
 Now, good men, quod he, herkeneth everich on.

THE DOCTOURES TALE.

THER was, as telleth Titus Livius, 11935
 A knight that cleped was Virginius,
 Fulfilled of honour and worthinesse,
 And strong of frendes, and of gret richeffe.
 This knight a doughter hadde by his wif;
 No children had he mo in all his lif. 11940
 Faire was this maid in excellent beautee
 Aboven every wight that man may see,
 For Nature hath with soveraine diligence
 Yformed hire in so gret excellence

stated in the conclusion of Boccace's 'Tale, *Philos.* l. v. ; "Dū-
 bitasi ora qual di costoro fusse maggior liberalità," &c. The
 queen determines in favour of the husband.

¶ 11929. *Ye, let that passen*] I have said all that I have to
 say in favour of this Prologue to The Doctour's Tale in the *Dis-
 course*, &c. § 28. It is only found in ms. A. In mss C. 1, HA. the
 following note is at the end of The Frankeleyn's Tale ; "Here
 endeth the Fr. T. and beginneth The Phisiciens Tale without
 a Prologe."

The Doctoures Tale] Virginius saveth his onely daughter, ra-
 ther than she shall be defiled by the litcherous judge Appius. &c.

As though she wolde sayn, Lo, I Nature, 11945
 Thus can I forme and peinte a creature,
 Whan that me list : who can me contrefete ?
 Pigmalion ? not though he ay forge and bete,
 Or grave, or peinte ; for I dare wel sain
 Apelles, Xeuxis, shulden werthe in vain 11950
 Other to grave, or peinte, or forge, or bete,
 If they presumed me to contrefete :
 For he that is the former principal
 Hath maked me his vicaire general
 To forme and peinten erthly creatures 11955
 Right as me list ; and eche thing in my cure is
 Under the mone that may wane and waxe ;
 And for my werk right nothing wol I axe :
 My lord and I ben ful of on accord ;
 I made hire to the worship of my lord, 11960
 So do I all min other creatures,
 What colour that they han or what figures.
 Thus semeth me that Nature wolde say.

This maid of age twelf yere was and tway
 In which that Nature hadde swiche delit ; 11965
 For right as she can peinte a lily whit
 And red a rose, right with swiche peinture
 She peinted hath this noble creature
 Er she was borne upon hire limmes free,
 Whereas by right swiche colours shulden be ; 11970
 And Phebus died hath hire tresses grete
 Like to the strenges of his burned hete.

And if that excellent were hire beautee,
 A thousand fold more vertuous was she.
 In hire ne lacked no condition 11975
 That is to preise, as by discretion.
 As wel in gost as body chaste was she,
 For which she floured in virginitee
 With all humilitee and abstinence,
 With all attemperance and patience, 11980
 With mesure eke of bering and array.
 Discrete she was in answering alway,
 Though she were wise as Pallas, dare I sain,
 Hire facounde eke ful womanly and plain :
 No contrefeted termes hadde she 11985
 To semen wise, but after hire degree
 She spake, and all hire wordes more and lesse
 Souning in vertue and in gentillesse.
 Shamefast she was in maidens shamefastnesse,
 Constant in herte, and ever in besinesse 11990
 To drive hire out of idel flogardie.
 Bacchus had of hire mouth right no maistrice,
 For wine and youthe don Venus encrese,
 As men in fire wol casten oile and grese.
 And of hire owen vertue unconstrained 11995
 She hath hireself ful often like yfeined,

♪. 11993. For *wine and youthe*] The context, I think, requires that we should read

For wine and *flouthe* don Venus encrese.

He is giving the reason why she avoided *flogardie*, and did not permit Bacchus to have maistrice of hire mouth, because *wine and flouthe* encrease the amorous inclinations: as oil and grese do fire. I can make no sense of *youthe* or *thoughtie*, as some will read.

For that she wolde flee the compaignie
 Wher likely was to treten of fohe,
 As is at festes, at revels, and at dances,
 That ben occasions of daliances.

11

Swiche thinges maken children for to be
 To sone ripe and bold, as men may see,
 Which is ful perilous, and hath ben yore;
 For al to sone may she lernen lore
 Of boldnesse whan she woxen is a wif.

12

And ye maiſtresses in your olde lif,
 That lordes doughters han in governance,
 Ne taketh of my wordes displeſance:
 Thinketh that ye ben set in governinges
 Of lordes doughters only for two thinges,
 Other for ye han kept your honestee,
 Or elles for ye han fallen in freetee,
 And knowen wel ynough the olde dance,
 And han forsaken fully swiche meſchance
 For evermo; therfore for Cristes sake
 To teche hem vertue loke that ye ne flake.

13

14

A theef of veniſon, that hath forlaſt
 His liberouſneſſe and all his olde craft,
 Can kepe a foreſt beſt of any man:
 Now kepeth hem wel, for if ye wol ye can.
 Loke wel that ye unto no vice aſſent,
 Lett ye be damaed for your wikke entent,
 For who ſo doth a traytour is certein:
 And taketh kepe of that I ſhal you ſain;

15

Of alle trefon foveraine peffilence 12025
Is whan a wight betrayeth innocence.

Ye fathers, and ye mothers eke also,
Though ye han children, be it on or mo,
Your is the charge of all hir furveance,
While that they ben under your governance: 12030
Beth ware that by ensample of your living,
Or by your negligence in chaffising,
That they ne perish, for I dare wel saye
If that they don ye shul it dere abeye.

Under a shepherd soft and negligent 12035
The wolf hath many a shepe and lamb to-rent.

Sufficeth this ensample now as here,
For I mote turne agen to my matere.

This maid, of which I tell my Tale expresse,
She kept hireself, hire neded no maistresse, 12040
For in hire living maidens mighten rede,
As in a book, every good word and dede
That longeth to a maiden vertuous:
She was so prudent and so bounteous,
For which the fame out sprong on every side 12045
Both of hire beautee and hire bountee wide,
That thurgh the lond they preised hire ech one
That loved vertue, sauf Envie alone,
That sory is of other mannes wele,
And glad is of his forwe and his unhele. 12050
The Doctour maketh this descriptionn.

This maiden on a day went in the toun

✱. 12051. *The Doctour*] Over against this line in the margin
Volume IV. E

THE DOCTOURES TALE.

Toward a temple, with hire mother dere,
As is of yonge maidens the manere.

Now was ther than a iustice in that toun 12055
That governour was of that region;

And so befell this juge his eyen cast
Upon this maid, avising hire ful fast
As she came forth by ther this juge stood:

Anon his herte changed and his mood, 12060
So was he caught with beautee of this maid,
And to himself ful prively he said,

This maiden shal be min for any man.
Anon the fend into his herte ran,
And taught him sodenly that he by sleight 12065

This maiden to his purpos winnen might;
For certes by no force ne by no mede
Him thought he was not able for to spede;

For she was strong of frendes, and eke she
Confermed was in swiche soveraine bountee
That wel he wist he might hire never winne

As for to make hire with hire body sinne:
For which with gret deliberatioun
He sent after a cherl was in the toun,

of ms. C. 1, is written *Augustinus*, which means, I f
this description of Envy is taken from St. Austine:
whether Chaucer meant to quote that saint by th
Doctour: it rather seems to be an idle parenth
ver. 7269.

¶ 12074. a cherl] So the best mss and ed. C:
mon editt. have *client*. In the *Rom. de la R.* wh

The which he knew for sotil and for bold. 12075
 This juge unto this cherl his tale hath told
 In secree wise, and made him to ensue
 He shulde tell it to no creature,
 And if he did he shulde lese his hede.
 And whan assented was this cursed rede 12080
 Glad was the juge, and maked him gret chere,
 And yaf him yestes precious and dere.

Whan shapen was all hir conspiracie
 Fro point to point, how that his lecherie
 Parformed shulde be ful sotilly, 12085
 As ye shul here it after openly,
 Home goth this cherl, that highte Claudius;
 This false juge, that highte Appius,
 (So was his name, for it is no fable,
 But knowen for an historial thing notable; 12090
 The sentence of it soth is out of doute)
 This false juge goth now fast aboute
 To hasten his delit all that he may.
 And so befell, sone after on a day
 This false juge, as telleth us the storie, 12095
 As he was wont, sat in his consistorie,
 And yaf his domes upon sondry cas,
 This false cherl came forth a ful gret pas,

told [ver. 5815—5894.] Claudius is called Sergent of Appius; and accordingly Chaucer a little lower, ver. 12204, calls him Servant—unto—Appius.—In the *Discourse*, &c. § 29, I forgot to mention the *Rom. de la Rose* as one of the sources of this Tale, though upon examination I find that our Author has drawn more from thence than from either Gower or Livy.

And saide; Lord, if that it be your will,
 As doth me right upon this piteous bill, 12100
 In which I plaine upon Virginus;
 And if that he wol sayn it is not thus
 I wol it preve, and finden good witnesse
 That soth is that my bille wol expresse.

The juge answerd, Of this in his absence 12105
 I may not yeve diffinitif sentence.
 Let don him call, and I wol gladly here:
 Thou shalt have right and no wrong as now here.

Virginus came to wete the juges will,
 And right anon was red this curfed bill; 12110
 The sentence of it was as ye shul here.

To you my Lord Sire Appius so dere
 Sheweth your poure servant Claudius
 How that a knight called Virginus
 Agein the lawe, agein all equitee, 12115
 Holdeth, expresse agein the will of me,
 My servant which that is my thral by right,
 Which from min hous was stolen on a night
 While that she was ful yong; I wol it preve
 By witnesse, Lord, so that it you not greve: 12120
 She n'is his doughter nought, what so he say;
 Wherefore to you, my Lord the juge, I pray;
 Yelde me my thral, if that it be your will.
 Lo, this was all the sentence of his bill.

Virginus gan upon the cherl behold; 12125
 But hastily er he his tale told,

And wold han preved it as shuld a knight,
 And eke by witneffing of many a wight
 That all was false that said his adversary,
 This cursed juge wolde nothing tary, 12130
 Ne here a word more of Virginus,
 But yave his jugement, and saide thus :

I deme anon this cherl his servant have ;
 Thou shalt no lenger in thin hous hire save ;
 Go bring hire forth, and put hire in our ward : 12135
 The cherl shal have his thral ; thus I award.

And whan this worthy knight Virginus,
 Thurgh sentence of this justice Appius,
 Muste by force his dere doughter yeven
 Unto the juge, in lecherie to liven, 12140
 He goth him home, and set him in his hall,
 And let anon his dere doughter call ;
 And with a face ded as ashen cold
 Upon hire humble face he gan behold,
 With fadres pitee sliking thurgh his herte, 12145
 Al wold he from his purpos not converte.

Doughter, quod he, Virginia by thy name,
 Ther ben two waies, other deth or shame,
 That thou must suffre, alas that I was bore !
 For never thou deservedest wherfore 12150
 To dien with a swerd or with a knif.
 O dere doughter, ender of my lif !
 Which I have softred up with swiche plesance
 That thou were nevēr out of my remembrance ;

O doughter! which that art my laste wo,
 And in my lif my laste joye also;
 O gemme of chastitee! in patience
 Take thou thy deth, for this is my sentence;
 For love and not for hate thou must be ded;
 My pitous hond must smiten of thin hed.
 Alas that ever Appius thee say!
 Thus hath he falsely juged thee to-day.
 And told hire all the cas, as ye before
 Han herd; it nedeth not to tell it more.

O mercy, dere father! quod this maid.
 And with that word she both hire armes laid
 About his necke, as she was wont to do,
 ('The tetes braut out of hire cyen two)
 And said, O goode father! shal I die?
 Is ther no grace? is ther no remedie?

No certes, dere doughter min! quod he.
 Than yeve me leiser, father min, quod she,
 My deth for to complaine a litel space;
 For parde Jepte yave his doughter grace
 For to complaine or he hire flow, alas!
 And God it wot nothing was hire trespas,

¶ 12159. *For love*] *Rom. de la R.* 5871.;

Cet par amour et sans haine

A la bele fille Virgine

Tantost a la teste coïsee,

Et puis au Juge presentee

Devant tous en plain Confessaire,

Et le Juge, selon l'Physaire,

Le commanda tantost a pendre—

See below, ver. 12190—3. The speeches of Virginius a daughter are of Chaucer's own invention.

But for she ran hire father first to see,
 To welcome him with gret solempnitee.
 And with that word she fell aswoun anon,
 And after, whan hire swouning was agon, 12180
 She riseth up, and to hire father said;
 Blessed be God that I shal die a maid!
 Yeve me my deth or that I have a shame:
 Doth with your child your wille a Goddes name.
 And with that word she praied him ful oft 12185
 That with his swerd he wolde smite hire soft;
 And with that word aswoun again she fell.
 Hire father, with ful sorweful herte and will,
 Hire hed of sinote, and by the top it hent,
 And to the juge he gan it to present, 12190
 As he sat yet in dome in consistorie;

And whan the juge it saw, as saith the storie,
 He bad to take him and anhang him fast:
 But right anon a thousand peple in thraff
 To save the knight for routh and for pitee, 12195
 For knowen was the false iniquitee.

The peple anon had suspect in this thing,
 By maner of the cherles chalenging,
 That it was by the assent of Appius;
 They wisten wel that he was lecherous: 12200
 For which unto this Appius they gon,
 And caste him in a prison right anon,
 Whereas he slow himself; and Claudius,
 That servant was unto this Appius,

THE PARDONERES PROLOGUE.

12205

Was demed for to hange upon a tree,
 But that Virginius of his pitee
 So prayed for him that he was exiled,
 And elles certes had he ben begiled:

The remenant were anhangid, more and lesse,
 That were consentant of this cursednesse. 12210

Here men may see how sin hath his merite:
 Beth ware, for no man wot whom God wol smite
 In no degree, ne in which maner wise
 The worthe of conscient may agrise 12215
 Of wicked lif, though it so privee be
 That no man wote therof sauf God and he;
 For be he lewed man or elles lered
 He n'ot how sope that he shal ben asered:
 Therefore I rede you this conseil take, 12220
 Forsaketh sinne or sinne you forsake.

THE PARDONERES PROLOGUE.

Ous Hoste gan to swere as he were wood,
 Harrow! (quod he) by nailes and by blood
 This was a false cherl and a false justice.
 As shameful deth as herte can devise
 Come to thisse juges and hir advocas.
 Algate this fely maide is slain, alas!
 Alas! to dere abought she hire beautee;
 Wherefore I say that al day man may see
 That yestes of Fortune and of Nature
 Ben cause of deth to many a creature. 12225

Hire beautee was hire deth, I dare wel fain:
 Alas! so pitouſly as ſhe was ſlain.
 Of bothe yeſtes that I ſpeke of now
 Men han ful often more for harm than prow.

But trewely, min owen maſter dere, 12235
 This was a pitous Tale for to here;
 But natheles paſſe over is no force.
 I pray to God to ſave thy gentil corps,
 And eke thyn urinals and thy jordanes,
 Thin Ypocras, and eke thy Galianes, 12240
 And every boiſt ful of thy letuarie
 God bleſſe hem and our Lady Seinte Marie.
 So note I the thou art a propre man,
 And like a prelat, by Seint Rouian.

✧. 12233. *Of bothe yeſtes*] This line is reſtored from mſſ. C. 1, H. 1. It had been ſupplied in the common copies by the following;

But hereof wel I not proceed as now.

✧. 12236. *a pitous Tale*] This is the reading of two good mſſ. A. and H. 1. but I believe it to be a głoſs: the other copies read *ermeſful*, which is near the truth. It ſhould be *ermeſful*. *Earme*, Sax. ſignifies miſer. Hence *earmelice*, *miſere*, *Cbr. Sax.* 65, *earme*, *miſeria*, *ibid.* 141. And a little lower, ver. 12246, *to erme* is uſed for *to grieve*, as the Sax. *earmian* is, *Cbr. Sax.* 189, 14.

✧. 12239. *thy jordanes*] This word is in *Walsingham*. p. 288; “Dux ollæ, quas *Jordanes* vocamus, ad ejus collum colligantur.” This is part of the puniſhment of a pretended *phificus et aſtologus* who had deceived the people by a falſe prediction. Hollinſhed calls them *two jorden pots*, p. 440.

✧. 12240. *Thin Ypocras*] *Ypocras* (or *Hippocras*) and *Galianes* ſhould both have been printed as proper names, with great initial letters. See the note on ver. 433.

THE PARDONERS PROLOGUE.

not wel? I cannot speke in terme; 12245
 I wot thou dost min herte to erme,
 I have almost caught a cardinale;
 Corpus Domini but I have triacle;
 elles a draught of moist and corny ale,
 but I here anon a mery Tale, 12250
 yn herte is lost for pitee of this maid.
 thou bel amy, thou Pardoner, he said,
 el us som mirth of japes right anon.
 It shal be don, quod he, by Seint Ronion.
 But first (quod he) here at this ale-stake 12255
 I wol both drinke and biten on a cake.
 But right anon thise gentiles gan to crie;
 Nay, let him tell us of no ribaudrie:
 Tell us som moral thing, that we mow lere
 Som wit, and thanne wol we gladly here. 12260
 I graunte ywis, quod he; but I must thinke
 Upon som honest thing while that I drinke.

ψ. 12245. *Said I not wel?* All the best mss. agree in giving this phrase to the Host in this place. It must remind us of the similar phrase, *Said I not?* which occurs so frequently in the mouth of Shakespeare's Host of the Garter, and may be sufficient, with the other circumstances of general resemblance, to make us believe that Shakespeare when he drew that character had not forgotten his Chaucer.

THE PARDONER'S TALE.

LORDINGS, quod he, in chirche whan I preche
 I peine me to have an hautein speche,
 And ring it out as round as goth a bell, 12265
 For I can all by rote that I tell.
 My teme is alway on, and ever was,
Radix malorum est cupiditas.

First I pronounce whennes that I come,
 And than my bulles shew I all and some : 12270
 Our liege lordes sele on my patente
 That shew I first, my body to warrente,
 That no man be so bold, ne preest ne clerk,
 Me to disturbe of Cristes holy werk :
 And after that than tell I forth my tales. 12275
 Bulles of popes and of cardinales,
 Of patriarkes and bishoppes, I shewe,
 And in Latin I speke a wordes fewe
 To saffron with my predication,
 And for to stere men to devotion : 12280

[*The Pardoner's Tale*] A company of riotours conspire to kill Death, who killeth them one after another. *Spiegel*.

¶ 12279. *To saffron*] So ms. A. and ed. Ca. 2. I have preferred it to the common reading, *savor*, as more expressive, and less likely to have been a gloss. *Saffron* was used to give colour as well as flavour.—The next lines are thus read in mss. C. 1, A. 1, 2, H. A. ;

In every village and in every toun
 This is my teme, and shal, and ever was,
Radix malorum est cupiditas.
 Than shew I forth, &c.

And perhaps I ought to have followed them.

Than shew I forth my longe cristal stones,
Ycrammed ful of cloutes and of bones;
Relikea they ben, as wenen they ethen.

Than have I in lator a shulder bone
Which that was of an holy lewes shepe. 12

Good men, say I, take of my wordes kepe :
If that this bone be washe in any well,
If cow, or calf, or shepe, or oxe, swell
That any worm hath etc, or worm yslonge,
Take water of that well and wash his tonge, 12
And it is hole anon : and forthermore,
Of pokes and of scab, and every sore,
Shal every shepe be hole that of this well
Drinketh a draught : take kepe of that I tell.

If that the good man that the bestes oweth 12
Wol every weke, er that the cok him croweth,
Fasting ydrinken of this well a draught,
As thilke holy Jew our eldres taught,
His bestes and his store shal multiplie :
And, Sires, also it heleth jalousie ;
For though a man be falle in jalous rage,
Let maken with this water his potage,
And never shal he more his wif mistrift,
Though he the soth of hire defaute wist,
Al had she taken preestes two or three.

Here is a mitaine eke that ye may see :
He that his hand wol put in this mitaine
He shal have multiplying of his graine,

✧. 12297. *Fasting ydrinken*] The prepositive *p*
been added for the sake of the metre.

Whan he hath sowen, be it whete or otes,
so that he offer pens or elles grotes. 12310

And men and women, o thing warne I you;
f any wight be in this chirche now
That hath don sinne horrible, so that he
Dare not for shame of it yshriven be;
Or any woman, be she yong or old, 12315
That hath ymade hire husband cokewold,
Swiche folk shul han no power ne no grace
To offer to my relikes in this place:
And who so hindeth him out of swiche blame
He wol come up and offer in Goddes name, 12320
And I assoye him by the auctoritee
Which that by bulle ygranted was to me.

By this gaude have I wonnen yere by yere
An hundred mark fin I was Pardonere.
I stonde like a clerk in my pulpet, 12325
And whan the lewed peple is down yset
I preche so as ye han herd before,
And tell an hundred false japes more:
Than peine I me to stretchen forth my necke,
And est and west upon the peple I becke, 12330
As doth a dove sitting upon a berne:
Myn hondes and my tonge gon so yerne,
That it is joye to see my beuiffesse.
Of avarice and of swiche cursednesse
As all my preching, for to make hem free 12335
To yeve hir pens, and namely unto me:

Volume IV.

F

For min entente is not but for to winne,
 And nothing for correction of sinne :
 I recke never whan that they be beried
 Though that hir soules gon a blake beried.

For certes many a predication
 Cometh oft time of evil entention ;
 Som for plesance of folk and flaterie,
 To ben avanced by hypocrisie ;
 And som for vaine glorie, and som for hate :
 For whan I dare non other wayes debate,
 Than wol I sting him with my tonge smerte
 In preching, so that he shal not asterte
 To ben defamed falsely, if that he
 Hath trespassed to my brethren or to me :
 For though I telle not his propre name,
 Men shal wel knowen that it is the same
 By signes, and by other circumstances.
 Thus quite I folk that don us displefances,
 Thus spit I out my venime under hewe
 Of holinesse, to seme holy and trewe.
 But shortly min entente I wol devise ;
 I preche of nothing but for covetise,
 Therfore my teme is yet, and ever was,
Radix malorum est cupiditas.

✧. 12340. *gon a blake beried*] So all the mss. I t
Aske. 2, which reads *on blake be ryed*. Skinner ex-
 ried to mean "in nigras et inauspicatas domos in
 cannot guess what it means.

✧. 12341. *For certes*] See R. R. ver. 5763.;

For est gode prechoun

: Cometh of evil entencion.

Thus can I preche again the same vice
 Which that I use, and that is avarice.
 But though myself be guilty in that sinne,
 Yet can I maken other folk to twinne
 From avarice, and fore hem to repente; 12365
 But that is not my principal entente:
 I preche nothing but for covetise.
 Of this matere it ought ynough suffise.

Than tell I hem ensamples many on
 Of olde stories longe time agon, 12370
 For lewed peple loven tales olde;
 Swiche thinges can they wel report and holde.
 What? trowen ye that whiles I may preche
 And winnen gold and silver for I teche,
 That I wol live in poverte wilfully? 12375
 Nay, nay; I thought it never trewely:
 For I wol preche and beg in sondry londes,
 I wol not do no labour with min hondes,
 Ne make baskettes for to live therby;
 Because I wol not beggen idelly. 12380
 I wol non of the apostles contrefete;
 I wol have money, wolle, chese, and whete,
 Al were it yeven of the pourest page,
 Or of the pourest widewe in a village,
 Al shulde hire children sterven for famine: 12385
 Nay, I wol drinke the licour of the vine,
 And have a joly wenche in every toun.

But herkeneth, Lordings, in conclusioun,

F ij

Your liking is that I shal tell a Tale.
 Now I have dronke a draught of corny ale, 12390
 By God I hope I shal you tell a thing
 That shal by reson ben at your liking;
 For though myself be a ful vicious man,
 A moral Tale yet I you tellen can,
 Which I am wont to prechen for to winne. 12395
 Now hold your pees, my Tale I wol beginne.

In Flandres whilom was a compaignie
 Of yonge folk that haunteden folie,
 As hasard, riot, stewes, and tavernes,
 Wheras with harpes, lutes, and giternes, 12400
 They dance and plaie at dis bothe day and night,
 And ete also and drinke over hir might,
 Thurgh which they don the devil sacrifice,
 Within the devils temple, in cursed wise,
 By superfluitee abhominable. 12405
 Hir othes ben so gret and so damnable
 That it is grisly for to here hem swere.
 Our blisful Lordes body they to-tere;
 Hem thought the Jewes rent him not ynough;
 And eche of hem at others sinne lough. 12410

And right anon in comen tombesteres
 Fetis and smale, and yonge fruitesteres,

✧. 12400. *Hem thought the Jewes*] The same thought is repeated in *The Persones Tale*.

✧. 12411. *tombesteres*] Women-dancers, from the Sax. *tumban*, to dance. He uses the word again in *The Tyl. of Lox.* b. 2. The edict. read *tombesteres*, which is a later word, formed (like *our tumeler*) from *tumbelan*, the frequentative of *tumban*.—

Singers with harpes, baudes, wafereres,
Which ben the veray devils officeres,
To kindle and blow the fire of lecherie, 12415
That is annexed unto glotonie.

The holy writ take I to my witnesse
That luxurie is in wine and dronkenesse.

Lo, how that dronken Loth unkindely
Lay by his daughters two unwetingly; 12420
So dronke he was he n'iste what he wrought.

Herodes, who so wel the stories sought,
Whan he of wine replete was at his feste,
Right at his owen table he yave his heste
'To fleen the Baptist John ful gilteles. 12425

Seneca saith a good word douteles;
He saith he can no difference find
Betwix a man that is out of his mind
And a man whiche that is dronkelew;
But that woodnesse, yfallen in a shrew, 12430
Perfevereth lenger than doth dronkenesse.

O glotonie! full of cursednesse,
O cause first of our confusion!
O original of our damnation!

With respect to the termination in *here*, see the note on ver. 2019; and in the next line *fruiteres* are to be understood to be female sellers of fruit.

✧. 12417. *The holy writ*] In marg. C. 1.; "Nolite inebriari
"vino, in quo est luxuria."

✧. 12426. *Seneca*] Perhaps he refers to Epist. 83.; "Extende
"in plures dies illum ebrii habitum: nunquid de furore dubi-
"tabis? nunc quoque non est minor sed brevior."

THE PARDONERS TALE.

had bought us with his blood again : 12435
 ow dere, shortly for to fain,
 was thilke cursed vilanie :
 was all this world for glotonie.
 n our father, and his wif also,
 radis to labour and to wo 12440
 driven for that vice, it is no drede;
 hile that Adam fasted, as I rede,
 as in Paradis, and whan that he
 f the fruit defended on a tree
 n he was out cast to wo and peine. 12445
 otonie! on thee wel ought us plaine.
 ! wist a man how many maladies
 ven of exceffe and of glotonies,
 wolde ben the more mesurable
 is diete, sitting at his table. 12450
 s! the shorte throte, the tendre mouth,
 keth that est and west, and north and south,
 rthe, in air, in water, men to-swinke
 gete a gloton deintee mete and drinke.
 his matere, O Poule! wel canst thou trete : 12455
 te unto wombe, and wombe eke unto mete,
 l God destroien bothe, as Paulus saith.
 s! a foule thing is it by my faith,

12442. *For while that Adam*] At this line the margin
 1. I, quotes *Hieronym. c. Jovinian.*; "Quam diu jejuna-
 lam in Paridiso fuit. Comedit et ejectus est. Statim du-
 rorem."

12456. *Mete unto wombe*] in marg. C. 1.; "Esca-
 " 56.

To say this word, and fouler is the dede,
 Whan man so drinketh of the white and rede 12460
 That of his throte he maketh his privee
 Thurgh thilke cursed superfluitee.

The apostle saith weping ful pitoufly,
 Ther walken many of which you told have I;
 I say it now weping with pitous vois 12465
 That they ben enemies of Cristes crois,
 Of whiche the end is deth; womb is hir God:
 O wombe, o belley! stinking is thy cod,
 Fulfilled of dong and of corruption;
 At either end of thee foule is the soun. 12470
 How gret labour and cost is thee to find!
 Thise cokes how they stamp, and strein, and grind,
 And turnen substance into accident,
 To fulfill all thy likerous talent!
 Out of the hardy bones knocken they 12475
 The mary, for they casten nought away
 That may go thurgh the gullet soft and sote:
 Of spicerie, of leef, of barke, and rote,
 Shal ben his sause ymaked, by delit
 To make him yet a newer appetit: 12480
 But certes he that haunteth swiche delices
 Is ded while that he liveth in tho vices.

✧. 12463. *The apostle saith*] *Philippians* lii. 18.

✧. 12469. *stinking is thy cod*] So ms. C.; or we may read,
 with ms. B. *of foule stinking cod*.

✧. 12471. *to find*] To supply: so ver. 12483;.

She found herself and eke hire doughtren two.

See also *P. P.* fol. 80.;

For a frend that findeth him falleth him never at nede.

A lecherous thing is wine, and dronkenesse
 Is ful of striving and of wretchednesse.
 O dronken man! disfigured is thy face, 1248
 Sour is thy breth, foul art thou to embrace,
 And thurgh thy dronken nose semeth the soun
 As though thou saidest ay Sampson! Sampson!
 And yet, God wot, Sampson dronk never no wine
 Thou falest as it were a stiked swine; 1249
 Thy tonge is lost, and all thin honest cure,
 For dronkenesse is veray sepulture
 Of mannes wit and his discretion.
 In whom that drinke hath domination
 He can no conseil kepe, it is no drede. 1249
 Now kepe you fro the white and fro the rede,
 And namely fro the white wine of Lepe,
 That is to sell in Fishstrete and in Chepe.
 This wine of Spaigne crepeth subtilly
 In other wines growing faste by, 1250

♪. 12497. *the white wine of Lepe*] According to the geographers Lepe was not far from Cadiz. This wine, of whatever it may have been, was probably much stronger than the Gascon wines usually drunk in England. La Rochelle and Bourdeaux, [ver. 12505.] the two chief ports of Gascony, were both in Chaucer's time part of the English dominions.—Spanish wines might also be more alluring upon account of the greater rarity. Among the orders of the royal household, 1604, is the following; [ms. Harl. 293, fol. 162.] "And wher
 "as in tymes past Spanish wines, called Sacke, were little or n
 "whit used in our courte, and that in later years, though
 "of ordinary allowance, it was thought convenient that
 "blemen, &c. might have a boule or glasse, &c. We un
 "standing that it is now used as common drinke, &c. re
 "the allowance to xii gallons a day for the court," &c.

Of which ther riseth swiche fumositee,
 That whan a man hath drunken draughtes three,
 And weneth that he be at home in Chepe,
 He is in Spaigne, right at the toun of Lepe,
 Not at the Rochell, ne at Burdeux toun, 12505
 And thanne wol he say Sampfoun ! Sampfoun !

But herkeneth, Lordings, o word, I you pray,
 That all the soveraine actes, dare I say,
 Of victories in the Olde Testament,
 Thurgh veray God that is omnipotent, 12510
 Were don in abstinence and in prayere ;
 Loketh the Bible, and ther ye mow it lere.

Loke, Attila the grete conquerour
 Died in his slepe with shame and dishonour,
 Bleding ay at his nose in dronkenesse : 12515
 A capitaine shulde live in sobrenesse.

And over all this aviseþ you right wel
 What was commanded unto Lamuel ;
 Not Samuel, but Lamuel, say I.
 Redeth the Bible, and find it expresly 12520
 Of wine yeving to hem that have justice.
 No more of this, for it may wel suffice.

And now that I have spoke of glotonie,
 Now wol I you defenden hafardrie.
 Hafard is veray moder of lesinges, 12525
 And of deceite and cursed forsweringes,
 Blaspheming of Crist, manslaughter, and wast also
 Of catel, and of time ; and forthermo

✱. 12520. *Redeth the Bible*] *Proverbs xxxi. 4.*

THE PARDONERS TALE

12530

It is repreve, and contrary of honour
 For to ben hold a comun hafardour,
 And ever the higher he is of estat

12535

The more he is holden desolat.
 If that a prince useth hafarderie,
 In alle governance and policie,
 He is, as by comun opinion,

Yhold the lesse in reputation.
 Strilbon, that was a wise embassadour,
 Was sent to Corinth with ful gret honour

12540

Fro Calidone, to maken hem alliance;
 And whan he came he happed him *par chance*
 That all the grettest that were of that lond
 Yplaying atte hafard he hem fond;
 For which, as sone as that it mighte be,

He stale him home agein to his contree,

¶ 12537. Strilbon] John of Salisbury (from whom our
 thor probably took this story and the following) calls him
 lon, *Polyerat.* l. 1. c. 5.; "Chilen Lacedæmonius, jun
 "societatis causâ missus Corinthum, duces et seniores
 "indentes invenit in aleâ. Iniecit itaque negotio
 "est," &c. Accordingly in ver. 12539. m. C. 1, re
 rightly *Lacedomye* instead of *Calidone*, the common
 Our Author has used before *Lacedomie* for *Lacedæ*
 11692.

¶ 12542. Yplaying atte hafard] I have added
 tive y for the sake of the metre. *Atte* is a disyllabi
 ginally *atten*, and is so used by R. G. p. 379. 431
 frequently corrupted into *at the*; but in Chauc
 I think should) almost every where he rettore
 3934, 4303, where some mss. have preserved
 ings—*atte* Bowe *atte* full.

And sayde ther, I wol not lese my name, 12545
Ne wol not take on me so gret defame,
You for to allie unto non hafardours :
Sendeth som other wise embassadours,
For by my trouthe me were lever die
Than I you shuld to hafardours allie; 12550
For ye, that ben so glorious in honours,
Shal not allie you to non hafardours,
As by my wille, ne as by my tretee.
This wise philosophre thus sayd he.

Loke eke how to the King Demetrius 12555
The King of Parthes, as the book sayth us,
Sent him a pair of dis of gold in scorne,
For he had used hafard therbeforne,
For which he held his glory and his renoun
At no value or reputatioun. 12560
Lordes may finden other maner play
Honest ynough to drive the day away.

Now wol I speke of othes false and grete
A word or two, as olde bookes trete.
Gret swering is a thing abhominable, 12565
And false swering is yet more reprevable.
The highe God forbad swering at al,
Witnesse on Mathew; but in special
Of swering sayth the holy Jeremie,
Thou shalt swere soth thin othes, and not lie. 12570
And swere in dome, and eke in rightwisnesse,
But idel swering is a cursednesse.

Behold and see that in the firste table
 Of highe Goddes hestes honourable
 How that the second best of him is this, 12575
 Take not my name in idel or amys.
 Lo, rather he forbedeth swiche fwering
 Than homicide or many an other thing.
 I say that as by ordre thus it stondeth,
 This knoweth he that his hestes understondeth 12580
 How that the second best of God is that :
 And forthermore, I wol thee tell all plat
 That vengeance shal not parten from his hous
 That of his othes is outrageous.
 By Goddes precious herte, and by his nailles, 12585
 And by the blood of Crist that is in Hailes,
 Seven is my chance, and thin is cink and treye :
 By Goddes armes if thou falsly pleye

¶ 12585. *his nailles*] i. e. with which he was nailed to cross. Sir J. Mandeville, c. vii. ; " And thereby in the wal
 " the place where the 4 *nayles* of our Lord weren hidd, &
 " had 2 in his hondes and 2 in his feet ; and of one of thes
 " Emperour of Costantynoble made a brydille to his hor
 " bere him in bataylle, and thorgh vertue thereof he
 " came his enemies," &c. He had said before, c. ii. tha
 " of the *nayles* that Crist was naylled with on the cross
 at Costantynoble, and " on in France in the kinges ch

¶ 12586. *the blood—in Hailes*] The Abbey of Hailes in
 cesterthire was founded by Richard King of the Roma
 ther to Henry III. This precious relick, which was aft
 commonly called " the blood of *Hailes*," was broug
 Germany by the son of Richard, Edmund, who bestow
 part of it upon his father's Abbey of *Hailes*, and some
 the other two parts to an abbey of his own four
Ashrug near Berkhamsted. *Hollingsh.* v. ii. p. 275.

This dagger shal thurghout thin herte go.

This fruit cometh of the bicchel bonestwo, 12590

Forswering, ire, falseneffe, and homicide.

Now for the love of Crist, that for us dide,

Leteth your othes both gret and smale.

But, Sires, now wol I tell you forth my Tale.

Thise riotoures three of which I tell, 12595

Long erst or prime rong of any bell,

Were set hem in a taverne for to drinke,

And as they sat they herd a belle clinke

Beforen a corps was caried to his grave;

That on of hem gan callen to his knave, 12600

Go bet, quod he, and axe redily

What corps is this that passeth here forth by,

¶ 12590. *the bicchel bones two*] The common reading is *thilke bones*. The alteration which I have ventured to make is not authorized entirely by any ms. but in part by several: ms. *A.* reads *bichet*; *C. 1.* *the beched*; *HA.* and *H.* *the bicched*.; *C. B. 9. Nc. ed. Ca. 1.* *the bicchid*; *B. α.* *the bicche*; *ed. Ca. 2.* *the bitched*. *Bickel*, as explained by Kilian, is *talus, ovillus et lusorius*, and *bickelen, talis ludere*. See also *Had. Junii Nomencl. n. 213*. Our dice indeed are the ancient *tesseræ*, (τετρες) not *tali*, (αλεγαγολοι) but both being games of hazard the implements of one might be easily attributed to the other. It should seem from *Junius, loc. cit.* that the Germans had preserved the custom of playing with the natural bones, as they have different names for a game with *tali ovilli*, and another with *tali bubuli*.

¶ 12601. *Go bet*] The same phrase is used in *Leg. of G. W. Dido*, 248;

The herd of hartes founden is anon,

With hey go bet, prickethou, let gon, let gon—

where it seems to be a term of the chase.

Volume IV.

G

And loke that thou report his name wel.

Sire, quod this boy, it nedeth never a del;
It was me told or ye came here two houres;
He was parde an old felaw of youres,
And sodenly he was yslain to-night,
Fordronke as he sat on his benche upright;
Ther came a privee theef men clepen Deth,
That in this contree all the peple sleth,
And with his spere he smote his herte atwo,
And went his way withouten wordes mo.
He hath a thousand slain this pestilence;
And, maister, or ye come in his presence
Me thinketh that it were ful necessarie
For to beware of swiche an adversarie;
Beth redy for to mete him evermore;
Thus taughte me my dame; I say no more.

By Seinte Marie, sayd this tavernere,
The child sayth soth, for he hath slain this yere
Hens over a mile, within a gret village,
Both man and woman, child, and hyne and I
I trowe his habitation be there:
To ben avised gret wisdome it were
Or that he did a man a dishonour.

Ye Goddes armes, quod this riotour,
Is it swiche peril with him for to mete?
I shal him seke by stile and eke by strete,
I make a vow by Goddes digre bones.
Herkeneth, felawes, we three ben alle ones;

Let eche of us hold up his hond to other,
 And eche of us becomen others brother,
 And we wol slen this false traitour Deth :
 He shal be slain, he that so many sleth,
 By Goddes dignitee, or it be night. 12635

Togeder han thise three hir trouthes plight
 To live and dien eche of hem for other,
 As though he were his owen boren brother.
 And up they stert al dronken in this rage,
 And forth they gon towards that village 12640
 Of which the taverner had spoke befor,
 And many a grisly oth than have they sworn,
 And Cristes blessed body they to-rent,
 Deth shal be ded, if that we may him hent.

Whan they han gon not fully half a mile, 12645
 Right as they wold han troden over a stile,
 An olde man and a poure with hem mette :
 This olde man ful mekely hem grette,
 And sayde thus; Now, Lordes, God you see!

The proudest of thise riotoures three 12650
 Answerd agen; What? cherl, with fery grace,
 Why art thou all forwrapped save thy face?
 Why livest thou so longe in so gret age?

This olde man gan loke in his visage,
 And sayde thus; For I ne cannot finde 12655
 A man, though that I walked into Inde,
 Neither in citee ne in no village,
 That wolde change his youthe for min age;



And therfore mote I han min age still
 As longe time as it is Goddes will. 12660
 Ne Deth, alas! ne wil not han my lif:
 Thus walke I like a restles caitif,
 And on the ground, which is my modres gate,
 I knocke with my staf erlich and late,
 And fay to hire, Leve mother, let me in. 12665
 Lo., how I vanish, flesh, and blood, and skin.
 Alas! whan shul my bones ben at reste?
 Mother, with you wold I changen my chesse,
 That in my chambre longe time hath be,
 Ye, for an heren clout to wrap in me. 12670
 But yet to me she wol not don that grace,
 For which ful pale and welked is my face.

But, Sires, to you it is no curtesie
 To speke unto an olde man vilanie,
 But he trespase in word or elles in dede. 12675
 In holy writ ye moun yourselven rede
 Ageins an olde man hore upon his hede
 Ye shuld arise: therfore I yeve you rede
 Ne doth unto an olde man nen harm now,
 No more than that ye wold a man did you 12680
 In age, if that ye may so long abide;
 And God be with you wher ye go or ride:
 I molle go thider as I have to go.

Nay, olde cherl, by God thou shalt not so,
 Sayde this other hasardour anen; 12685
 Thou partest not so lightly, by Seint John.

Thou spake right now of thilke traitour Deth,
 That in this contree all our frendes sleth;
 Have here my trouthe, as thou art his espie,
 Tell wher he is, or thou shalt it abie 12690
 By God and by the holy sacrament,
 For sothly thou art on of his assent
 To slen us yonge folk, thou falle these.

Now, Sires, quod he, if it be you so lese
 To finden Deth, tourne up this croked way, 12695
 For in that grove I left him by my say
 Under a tree, and ther he wol abide,
 Ne for your boht he wol him nothing hide.
 Se ye that oke? right ther ye shuln him find.
 God save you that bought agen mankind, 12700
 And you amende! Thus sayd this olde man.

And everich of thise riotoures ran
 Til they came to the tree, and ther they found
 Of Floreins fine of gold ycoined round
 Wel nigh an eighte bushels, as hem thought: 12705
 No lenger than after Deth they fought,
 But eche of hem so glad was of the sight,
 For that the Floreins ben so faire and bright,
 That down they sette hem by the precious hord;
 The werste of hem he spake the firste word, 12710

Brethren, quod he, take kepe what I shal say;
 My wit is gret though that I bourde and play.
 This tresour hath Fortune unto us yeven,
 In mirth and jolitee our lif to liven,

THE PARDONERES TALE.

and lightly as it cometh so wol we spend. 12713
 y, Goddes precious dignitee ! who wend
 To-day that we shuld han so faire a grace ?
 But might this gold be caried fro this place
 Home to myn hous, or elles unto youre, 12720
 (For wel I wote that all this gold is oures)
 Thanne were we in high felicitye ;
 But trewely by day it may not be,
 Men wolden say that we were cheeves strong, 12725
 And for our owen trefour don us hong.
 This trefour must ycaried be by night
 As wisely and as sleighly as it might ;
 Wherefore I rede that cut among us alle
 We drawe, and let see wher the cut wol falle ;
 And he that hath the cut, with herte blith, 12730
 Shal rennen to the toun, and that ful swith,
 And bring us bred and win ful prively ;
 And two of us shal kepen subtilly
 This trefour wel ; and if he wol not tarien, 12735
 Whan it is night we wol this trefour carien
 By on assent wher as us thinketh best.
 That on of hem the cut brought in his fest, 12740
 And bad hem drawe, and loke wher it wold falle,
 And it fell on the yongest of hem alle,
 And forth toward the toun he went anon :
 And al so sone as that he was agon
 That on of hem spake thus unto that other :
 Thou wotest wel thou art my sworn brother,

THE PARDONERS TALE.

'Thy profit wol I tell thee right anon.
Thou wost wel that our felaw is agon,
And here is gold, and that ful gret plentee,
That shal departed ben among us three;
But natheles, if I can shape it so
That it departed were among us two
Had I not don a frendes turn to thee?

That other answerd, I n'ot how that may be
He wote wel that the gold is with us tweye.
What shuln we don? what shuln we to him f

Shal it be conseil? sayd the firste shrewe,
And I shal tellen thee in wordes fewe
What we shul don, and bring it wel aboute.

I grante, quod that other, out of doute,
That by my trouth I wol thee not bewreie.

Now, quod the first, thou wost wel we ben t
And tweie of us shul strenger be than on.
Loke, whan that he is set thou right anon
Arise, as though thou woldest with him play,
And I shal rive him thurgh the sides tway
While that thou stroglest with him as in game
And with thy dagger loke thou do the same;
And than shal all this gold departed be,
My dere frend! betwixen thee and me;
Than moun we bothe our lustes al fulfille,
And play at dis right at our owen wille.
And thus accorded ben thise shrewes tweye
To fien the thridde, as ye han herd me seye.

This yongest, which that wente to the topp,
 Ful oft in herte he rolleth up and donn
 The beautes of thise Floreins newe and bright.
 O Lord! quod he, if so were that I might
 Have all this tresour to myself alone, 12775
 Ther n'is no man that liveth under the trone
 Of God that shulde live so mery as I.
 And at the last the fend our enemy
 Putte in his thought that he shuld poison beye,
 With which he mighte slen his felaws tweye: 12780
 For why? the fend fond him in swiche living
 That he had leve to forwe him to bring;
 For this was outrely his ful entente,
 To slen hem both and never to repente.
 And forth he goth, no lenger wold he tary, 12785
 Into the toun unto a potecary,
 And praied him that he him wolde sell
 Som poison, that he might his ratouns quell;
 And eke ther was a polkat in his hawe
 That, as he sayd, his capons had yflawe; 12790
 And fayn he wolde him wreken, if he might,
 Of vermine that destroyed hem by night.

The potecary answerd, Thou shalt have
 A thing, as wisly God my soule save,
 In all this world ther n'is no creature 12795
 That ete or dronke hath of this confecture,
 Not but the mountance of a corne of whete,
 That he ne shal his lif anon forlete,

Ye, sterue he shal, and that in lesse while
 Than thou wolt gon a pas not but a mile; 12800
 This poison is so strong and violent.

This curfed man hath in his hond yhent
 This poison in a box, and swithe he ran
 Into the nexte strete unto a man,
 And borwed of him large botelles three, 12805
 And in the two the poison poured he;
 The thridde he kepte clene for his drinke,
 For all the night he shope him for to swinke
 In caryng of the gold out of that place.

And whan this riotour with fory grace 12810
 Hath filled with win his grete botelles three
 To his felawes agen repaireth he.

What nedeth it therof to sermon more?
 For right as they had cast his deth before
 Right so they han him slain, and that anon. 12815
 And whan that this was don thus spake that on;
 Now let us sit and drinke, and make us mery,
 And afterward we wiln his body bery.
 And with that word it happed him *par cas*
 To take the botelle ther the poison was, 12820
 And dronke, and yave his felaw drinke also,
 For which anon they storven bothe two.

But certes I suppose that Avicenne
 Wrote never in no canon ne in no fenne
 Mo wonder signes of empoisoning 12825
 Than had thise wretches two or hir ending.

THE PARDON

Ben thife homicides two,
The false empoisoner also.

ednesse of alle cursednesse!
ours homicide! o wickednesse!

onie, luxurie, and hasardrie!
blasphemour of Crist with vilpaine

othes grete of usage and of pride!
! mankinde, how may it betide

at to thy Creatour, which that thee wrought, 12835
and with his precious herte-blood thee bought,

thou art so false and so unkind? alas!
Now, good men, God foryeve you your trespas,

And ware you fro the sinne of awarice. 12840
Min holy pardon may you all warice,

So that ye offre nobles or starlinges,
Or elles silver broches, spones, ringes.

Poweth your hed under this holy halle.
Cometh up, ye wives, and offreth of your walle;

Your names I entre here in my roll anon; 12845
Into the blisse of heven shul ye gon:

I you assoile by min high powere,
You that wiln offre, as clene and eke as clere

As ye were borne. Lo, Sires, thus I preche;
And Jesu Crist, that is our soules leche,

So graunte you his pardon to receive,
For that is best, I wol you not deceive.

But, Sires, o word forgate I in my Tale;
I have relikes and pardon in my male

ones taken pardon as ye wende,
 newe and freshe at every tounes ende,
 that ye offren alway newe and newe
 bles or pens which that ben good and trewe.
 s an honour to everich that is here 1286j
 at ye moun have a sufficient Pardonere
 affoilen you in contree as ye ride
 adventures which that moun betide.
 adventure ther may falle on or two
 in of his hors, and breke his necke atwo. 1287a
 te, which a seurtee is it to you alle
 at I am in your felawship yfalle,
 at may affoile you both more and lasse,
 an that the soule shal fro the body passe.
 le that our Hoste shal beginne, 1287j
 he is most envyloned in fere

THE PARDONERS TALE

us ended ben this homicides two,
nd eke the false empoisoner also.

12830

O cursednesse of alle cursednesse!
O traitours homicide! o wickednesse!

O glotonie, luxurie, and hasardrie!
Thou blasphemour of Crist with vilanie
And othes gyfte of usage and of pride!

Alas! mankinde, how may it betide
That to thy Creatour, which that thee wrought, 12835
And with his precious herte-blood thee bought,
Thou art so false and so unkind? alas!

Now, good men, God foryeve you your trespass,
And ware you fro the sinne of avarice.

12840

Min holy pardon may you all warice,
So that ye offre nobles or starlinges,

Or elles silver broches, spones, ringes.
Boweth your hed under this holy hulle.

Cometh up, ye wives, and offreth of your wolle;
Your names I entre here in my roll anon; 12845

Into the blisse of heven shul ye gon:
I you affoile by min high powere,

You that wiln offre, as clene and eke as clere
As ye were borne. Lo, Sires, thus I preche;

12

And Jesu Crist, that is our soules leche,
So graunte you his pardon to receive,

For that is best, I wol you not deceive.
But, Sires, o word forgate I in my Tale;

I have reliques and pardon in my male

THE PARDONERS TALE.

As faire as any man in Englelond,
Which were me yeven by the Popes hond.
If any of you wol of devotion
Offren, and han min absolution,
Cometh forth anon, and kneleth here adoun
And mekely receiveth my pardoun ;
Or elles taketh pardon as ye wende,
Al newe and freshe at every tounes ende,
So that ye offren alway newe and newe
Nobles or pens which that ben good and tre
It is an honour to everich that is here
That ye moun have a suffisant Pardonere
To assoilen you in contree as ye ride
For adventures which that moun betide.
Paraventure ther may falle on or two
Doun of his hors, and breke his necke atwo
Loke, which a seurtee is it to you alle
That I am in your felawship yfalle,
'That may assoile you both more and lasse,
Whan that the soule shal fro the body passe.
I rede that our Hoste shal beginne,
For he is most envoluped in sinne.
Come forth, Sire Hoste, and offre first anon
And thou shalt kisse the relikes everich on,
Ye for a grote : unbokel anon thy purse.

Nay, nay, quod he ; than have I Cristes c
Let be, quod he ; it shal not be, so the ich.
'Thou woldest make me kisse thin olde brech

THE PARDONERS TALE:

And swere it were a relike of a seint,
Though it were with thy foundement depeint :
But by the crois which that Seint Helene fond
I wolde I had thin coilons in min hond. 12886

Inlede of relikes or of seintuarie.
Let cut hem of, I wol thee help hem carie :
They shul be shrined in an hogges tord.
This Pardoner answered not a word ; 12890

So wroth he was no worde ne wolde he say.
Now, quod our Hoste, I wol no longer play
With thee, ne with non other angry man.

But right anon the worthy knight began, 12895
(Whan that he saw that all the peple lough)
No more of this, for it is right ynough.
Sire Pardoner, be mery and glad of chere ;

And ye, Sire Hoste, that ben to me so dere,
I pray you that ye kisse the Pardoner ;
And, Pardoner, I pray thee draw thee ner, 12900

And as we diden let us laugh and play.
Anon they kised, and riden forth hir way.

★ 12885. Seint Helene] Sir John Mandeville, c. vii. p. 93:
" And nyghe that awtier is a place undre the, 42 degrees of
" Copenesse, where the holy croys was founden be the wytt of
" Seint Hlyn, undir a roche, where the Jewes had hidde it ;
" and that was the veray croys affayed ; for they founden
" crosses, on of oure Lord, and of the 2 theves and seyn
" Fyve proved hem on a ded body that aros from dethe
" Iye, whan that it was leyd on it that oure Lord dyed on
See also c. ii. p. 15.

THE SHIPMANNES PROLOGUE.

Our Hoste upon his stirrops stode anon,
 And saide, Good men, herkeneth everich on,
 This was a thrifty Tale for the nones. 12905
 Sire Parish Preeft, quod he, for Goddes bones
 Tell us a Tale; as was thy forward yore;
 I see wel that ye lerned men in lore
 Can moche good, by Goddes dignitee.

The Person him answerd, *Benedicite!* 12910
 What eileth the man so finfully to swere?

Our Hoste answerd, O Jankin! be ye there?
 Now good men, quod our Hoste, herkneth to me;
 I smell a Loller in the wind, quod he:
 Abideth for Goddes digne passion, 12915
 For we shul han a predication:

This Loller here wol prechen us somwhat.
 Nay, by my fathers soule, that shal he nat,
 Sayde the Shipman; here shal he nat preche;
 He shal no gospel glosen here ne teche. 12920

*. 12914. *I smell a Loller*] This is in character, as appears from a treatise of the time, *Harl. Catal.* n. 1666.; "Now in Engelond it is a comun protectioun ayens persecutioun—if a man is customable to swere nedeles, and fals, and unavisid, by the bones, nailes, and sides, and other membres of Crist.—And to abthevne fro othes nedeles and unlesful—and repreve synne by way of charite, is mater and cause now why prelates and sum lordes sclaudren men, and clepen hem *Lollardes* or *Erretikes*," &c.

*. 12919. *Saye to the Shipman*] So ms. B. D. the one ms. (as have said in the *Discourse*, &c., 31,) which countenances the

We leven all in the gret God, quod he ;
 He wolde fowen som difficultee,
 Or springen cockle in our cleue corne ;
 And therfore Holte, I warne thee beforne
 My joly body shal a Tale telle, 1292
 And I shal clinken you so mery a belle
 That I shal waken all this compaignie ;
 But it shal not ben of philosophie,
 Ne of phylike, ne termes queinte of lawe :
 Ther is but litel Latin in my mawe. 1293

THE SHIPMANNES TALE.

A Marchant whilom dwelled at Seint Denise
 That riche was, for which men held him wise :
 A wit he had of excellent beautee,
 And compaignable and revelous was she,

giving of this Prologue to the Shipman. In *ms. C.* and *D.* the passage is given to the Sompnour, but not by way of Prologue to his Tale. In *C.* it is followed by The Wife of Bathes Prologue and in *D.* by the Prologue which in this edit. is prefixed to The Squieres Tale. — When these diversities are considered, and also that the whole passage is wanting in the five best *ms.* may perhaps appear not improbable that these twenty eight lines, though composed by Chaucer, had not been inserted by him in the body of his Work, that they were therefore omitted in the first copies, and were afterwards injudiciously prefixed to The Squieres Tale when the true Prologue of that Tale, printed above, was become unsuitable, by reason of the Tale itself being removed out of its proper place.

¶ 12923. *springen cockle*] This seems to allude to *Loller* derived from *lolum*; but *Du Cange*, in v. *Lollardus*, rather supposes that *Lollard* was a word of German original, signifying *impetitor*, a mumbler of prayers. see also *Kilian*, in v. *Lollard*.
 The Shipmannes Tale.] A marchant of St. Denise is confus

Which is a thing that causeth more dispence 12935
 Than worth is all the chere and reverence
 That men hem don at festes and at dances :
 Swiche salutations and contenances
 Passen as doth a shadwe upon the wal ;
 But wo is him that payen mote for all. 12940
 The sely husbond algate he mote pay,
 He mote us clothe and he mote us array
 All for his owen worship richely,
 In which array we dancen jolily :
 And if that he may not paraventure, 12945
 Or elles lust not swiche dispence endure,
 But thinketh it is wasted and ylost,
 Than mote another payen for our cost,
 Or lene us geld, and that is perilous.

This noble marchant held a worthy hous, 12950
 For which he had all day so gret repaire
 For his largeffe, and for his wif was faire,
 That wonder is. But herkeneth to my Tale.

Amonges all thise gestes gret and smale
 There was a monk, a faire man and a bold, 12955
 I trow a thritty winter he was old,
 That ever in on was drawing to that place.
 This yonge monk, that was so faire of face,

by his owne wife, and by a monke called Dan John. This Argument is taken out of Bochas and his Novels. *Steels.*

¶ 12942. *He mote us clothe.*] In ed. *Urr.* it is *clome* by care of the miss. that I have seen read *us*, which would lead me to think that this Tale was originally intended for a female character.

Acquainted was so with this goode man.
 Sithen that hir firste knowlege began.
 That in his hous as familiar was he
 As it possible is any frend to be.

11964

And for as mochel as this goode man
 And eke this monk of which that I began
 Were bothe two yborne in o village,
 The monk him claimeth as for cosynage,
 And he again him sayd not ones nay,
 But was as glad therof as foule of day,
 For to his herte it was a gret plesance.

11965

Thus ben they knit with eterne alliance,
 And eche of hem gan other for to ensure
 Of brotherhed while that hir lif may dure.
 Free was Dan John, and namely of dispence,

11966

As in that hous, and ful of diligence
 To don plesance, and also gret coslage:
 He not forgate to yeve the leste page
 In all that hous, but after hir degree

He yave the lord and sithen his meinee,
 Whan that he came, som maner honest thin
 For which they were as glad of his coming
 As foule is fayn whan that the sonne up ris

No more of this as now, for it suffiseth.

But so befell this marchant on a day
 Shope him to maken redy his array
 Toward the toun of Brugges for to fare
 To bycn ther a portion of ware,

he hath to Paris sent anon
 er, and praied hath Dan John
 shuld come to Seint Denis, and pleie
 n and with his wif a day or tweie, 12990
 Brugges went in alle wise.
 oble monk, of which I you devise,
 his abbot as him list licence,
 he was a man of high prudence,
 an officer out for to ride 12995
 hir granges and hir bernis wide)
 o Seint Denis he cometh anon.
 was so welcome as my Lord Dan John,
 cousin, ful of curtesie?
 n he brought a jutbe of Malvesie, 13000
 another ful of fine Vernage,
 tile, as ay was his usage.
 I let hem ete, and drinke, and pleye,
 chant and this monk, a day or tweye.
 middle day this marchant up ariseth, 13005
 his nedes sadly him aviseth,
 nto his countrour hous goth he,
 with himseiven, wel may be,
 yere how that it with him stood,
 that he dispended had his good, 13010
 at he encreased were or non.
 es and his bagges many on
 3. *Malvesie*] See this note on ver. 9681.

Acquainted was so with this goode man,
 Sithen that hir firste knowlege began, 1296
 That in his hous as familier was he
 As it possible is any frend to be.

And for as mochel as this goode man
 And eke this monk of which that I began
 Were bothe two yborne in o village, 1296
 The monk him claimeth as for cosynage,
 And he again him sayd not ones nay,
 But was as glad therof as foule of day,
 For to his herte it was a gret plesance,

Thus ben they knit with eterne alliance, 1297
 And eche of hem gan other for to ensue
 Of brotherhed while that hir lif may dure.

Free was Dan John, and namely of dispence,
 As in that hous, and ful of diligence
 To don plesance, and also gret costage : 1297
 He not forgate to yeve the leste page
 In all that hous, but after hir degree
 He yave the lord and fithen his meinee,
 Whan that he came, som maner honest thing,
 For which they were as glad of his coming 1298
 As foule is fayn whan that the sonne up riseth.
 No more of this as now, for it suffiseth.

But so befell this marchant on a day
 Shope him to maken redy his array
 Toward the toun of Brugges for to fare, 1298
 To byen ther a portion of ware,

THE SHIPMANNES TALE.

For which he hath to Paris sent anon
A messager, and praied hath Dan John
That he shuld come to Seint Denis, and pleie
With him and with his wif a day or tweie, 120
Or he to Brugges went, in alle wise.

This noble monk, of which I you devise,
Hath of his abbot as him list licence,
(Because he was a man of high prudence,
And eke an officer out for to ride 125
To seen hir granges and hir bernies wide)
And unto Seint Denis he cometh anon.

Who was so welcome as my Lord Dan John,
Our dere cousin, ful of curtesie?
With him he brought a jutbe of Malvesie, 130
And eke another ful of fine Vernage,
And volatile, as ay was his usage.
And thus I let hem ete, and drinke, and pleye,
This marchant and this monk, a day or tweye.

The thridde day this marchant up ariseth, 130
And on his nedes sadly him aviseþ,
And up into his countrour hous goth he,
To reken with himseiven, wet may be,
Of thilke yere how that it with him stood,
And how that he dispended had his good, 135
And if that he encrefed were or non.
His bookes and his bagges many on

†. 13003. *Malvesie*] See the note on ver. 9681.

He layth befor him on his counting boord,
 Ful riche was his tresour and his hord,
 For which ful fast his countour dore he
 And eke he n'olde no man shuld him let
 Of his accountes for the mene time;
 And thus he sit til it was passed prime.

Dan John was risen in the morwe also
 And in the gardin walketh to and fro,
 And hath his thinges sayd ful curteisly.

This goode wif came walking prively
 Into the gardin ther he walketh soft,
 And him salueth, as she hath don oft:
 A maiden child came in hire compaignie
 Which as hire lust she may governe and
 For yet under the yerde was the maide.

O dere cosin min! Dan John, she saide
 What aileth you so, rathe for to arise?

Nece, quod he, it ought ynough suffis
 Five houres for to slepe upon a night,
 But it were for an olde appalled wight,

¶ 13027. *under [the yerde]* This was proper
 dren. Mf. Bod. Jun. 66. *Monachicum Colloquium*,

Mag. Quid manducas in die?
Homo yttu on dag!

Dis. Adhuc carnibus vescor,
Gyt fleschmetum ic bruce,
quia potes sum
Fortham elik ic som
sub vitia degens.
under gyrds drohtaiende.

See before, ver. 7898.

As ben thise wedded men, that lie and dare,
 As in a fourme sitteth a wery hare
 Were al forstraught with houndes gret and smale.
 But, dere nece! why be ye so pale? 13036

I trowe certes that our goode man
 Hath you laboured sith this night began,
 That you were nede to resten hastily.
 And with that word he lough ful merily, 13040
 And of his owen thought he waxe all red.

This faire wif gan for to shake hire hed,
 And saied thus; Ye, God wote all, quod she:
 Nay, cosyn min, it stant not so with me;
 For by that God that yave me soule and lif 13045
 In all the reame of Fraunce is ther no wif
 That lasse lust hath to that sory play,
 For I may sing alas and wala wa
 That I was borne! but to no wight (quod she)
 Dare I not tell how that it stant with me; 13050
 Wherefore I thinke out of this lond to wende,
 Or elkes of myself to make an ende,
 So ful am I of drede and eke of care.

This monk began upon this wif to stare,
 And sayd, Alas! my nece, God forbede 13055
 That ye for any sorwe or any drede
 Fordo yourself: but telleth me your grefe,
 Paraventure I may in your mischese
 Conseile or helpe; and therfore telleth me
 All your annoy, for it shal ben secree; 13060

THE SHIPMANNES TALE;

For on my portos here I make an oth
That never in my lif, for lefe ne loth,
Ne shal I of no cōseil you bewray.

The same agen to you, quod she, I say. 13065
By God and by this portos I you swere,

Though men me wolden all in peces tere,
Ne shal I never, for to gon to helle,

Bewrey o word of thing that ye me tell;
Nought for no cosnage ne alliance,

But veraily for love and affiance. 13070
Thus ben they sworne, and hereupon they kiste,

And eche of hem told other what hem liste.
Cofin, quod she, if that I had a space,

As I have non, and namely in this place, 13075
Than wold I tell a legend of my lif;

What I have suffred sith I was a wif
With min husbond, al be he your cofin.

Nay, quod this monk, by God and Seint Martin
He n'is no more cofin unto me

Than is the leef that hangeth on the tree; 13080
I clepe him so, by Seint Denis of France,

To han the more cause of acquaintance
Of you, which I have loved specially

Aboven alle women likerly;

✱. 13061. on my portos] i. e. Breviary. *Du Cange*, in v. *Portiforium*. *Portuasses* are mentioned among other prohibite books in the Stat. 3 and 4 E. VI. c. 10.; and in the parliamen roll of 7 E. IV. n. 40. there is a petition that the robbing of *Portecus*—Grayell, Manuell, &c. should be made felony wt clergy, to which the king answered *Le Roy s'avijera*.

This swere I you on my professioun. 13085

Telleth your grefe, lest that he come adoun,

And hasteeth you, and goth away anon.

My dere love! quod she, o my Dan John!

Ful lese were me this conseil for to hide,

But out it mote, I may no lenger abide. 13090

Myn husbond is to me the werste man

That ever was sith that the world began :

But sith I am a wif it sit not me

To tellen no wight of our privetee

Neither in bed ne in non other place; 13095

God shilde I shulde it tellen for his grace :

A wif ne shal not sayn of hire husbond

But all honour, as I can understond ;

Save unto you thus moch I tellen shal :

As helpe me God he is nought worth at all, 13100

In no degree the value of a fle.

But yet me greveth most his nigardie :

And wel ye wot that women naturally

Desiren thinges fixe as well as I ;

They wolden that hir husbondes shulden be 13105

Hardy, and wise, and riche, and therto free,

And buxome to his wif, and fresh a-bedde.

But by that ilke Lord that for us bledde,

For his honour myselven for to array,

A Sonday next I muste nedes pay. 13110

An hundred franks, or elles am I lorne ;

Yet were me lever that I were unborne

Than were don a felandre or vilanie.
 And if minn husbond eke might it espie
 I n'ere but lost; and therefore I you prey 13115
 Lene me this summe, or elles mote I dey :
 Dan John, I say, lene me this hundred frankes;
 Parde I wol not faille you my thanks,
 If that you list to do that I you pray;
 For at a certain day I wol you pay, 13120
 And do to you what plesance and service
 That I may don, right as you list devise;
 And but I do God take on me vengeance
 As foul as ever had Genelon of France.

This gentil monk answered in this manere; 13125
 Now trewely, min owen lady dere !
 I have (quod he) on you so grete a routhe,
 That I you swere, and plighte you my trouthe,
 That whan your husbond is to Flandres fare
 I wol deliver you out of this care, 13130
 For I wol bringen you an hundred frankes.
 And with that word he caught hire by the flankes,
 And hire embraced hard, and kiste hire oft.
 Goth now your way, quod he, al stille and soft,
 And let us dine as sone as that ye may, 13135
 For by my kalender it is prime of day :
 Goth now, and beth as trewe as I shal be.

Now elles God forbede, Sire, quod she.
 And forth she goth as joly as a pie,
 And bad the cokes that they shuld hem hie, 13140

So that men mighten dine, and that anon.
 Up to hire husbond is this wif ygon,
 And knocketh at his countour boldely.
Qui est la? quod he. Peter, it am I,
 Quod she. What, Sire, how longe wol ye fast? 13145
 How longe time wol ye reken and cast
 Your summes, and your bookes, and your thinges?
 The devil have part of all swiche rekeninges!
 Ye han ynough parde of Goddes sonde.
 Come doun to-day, and let your bagges stonde.
 Ne be ye not ashamed that Dan John 13151
 Shal fasting all this day elenge gon?
 What! let us here a masse, and go we dine.
 Wif, quod this man, litel canst thou divine
 The curious besynesse that we have; 13155
 For of us chapmen, all so God me save,
 And by that lord that cleped is Seint Iue,
 Scarfly amonges twenty ten shul thrive
 Continuelly, lastyng unto oure age.
 We moun wel maken chere and good visage, 13160
 And driven forth the world as it may be,
 And kepen oure estat in privitee
 Til we be ded, or elles that we play
 A pilgrimage, or gon out of the way:
 And therfore have I gret necessitee 13165
 Upon this queinte world to avisen me;
 For evermore mote we stond in drede
 Of hap and fortune in our chapmanhede.

To Flanders wol I go to-morwe at day,
 And come agein as sone as ever I may, 13170
 For which, my dere wif! I thee beseke
 As be to every wight buxom and trike,
 And for to kepe our good be curious,
 And honestly governe wel our hous.
 Thou hast ynough in every maner wise 13175
 That to a thrifty household may suffice.
 Thee lacketh non array ne no vitaille;
 Of silver in thy purse shalt thou not faille.
 And with that word his countour dore he shette,
 And down he goth; no lenger wold he lette; 13180
 And hastily a masse was ther saide,
 And speedily the tables were ylaide,
 And to the diner faste they hem speedde,
 And richely this monk the chapman fedde.

And after diner Dan John sobrelly 13185
 This chapman toke apart, and prively
 He said him thus; Cofin, it stondeth so
 That wel I see to Brugges ye wol go;
 God and Seint Austyn spede you and gide!
 I pray you, cofin, wisely that ye ride; 13190
 Governeth you also of your diete
 Attemprely, and namely in this hete.
 Betwix us two nedeth no strange fare:
 Farewel, cofin, God shilde you fro care!
 If any thing ther be by day or night, 13195
 If it lie in my power and my might,

That ye me wol command in any wise,
It shal be don right as ye wol devise.

But o thing or ye go, if it may be;
I wolde prayen you for to lene me 132

An hundred frankes for a weke or tweye,
For certain bestes that I muste beye,
To storen with a place that is oures,
(God help me so I wold that it were youre)
I shal not faille surely of my day, 13203

Not for a thousand frankes, a mile way.
But let this thing be secree, I you preye;
For yet to-night this bestes mote I beye.
And fare now wel, min owen cosin dere!
Grand mercy of your cost and of your chere. 13210

This noble marchant gentilly anon
Answerd and said, O cosin min, Dan John!
Now likerly this is a smal requeste;
My gold is youre, whan that it you leste,
And not only my gold but my chaffare: 13215

Take what you lest, God shilde that ye spare.
But o thing is, ye know it wel ynough
Of chapmen that hir money is hir plough:
We moun creancen while we han a name,
But goodles for to ben it is no game. 13220

Pay it agen whan it lith in your ese:
After my might ful fayn wold I you please.
This hundred frankes set he forth anon,
And prively he toke hem to Dan John:

No wight in al this world wist of this
 Saving this marchant and Dan John a
 They drinke, and speke, and come a w
 Til that Dan John rideth to his abhey

The morwe came, and forth this n
 To Flandres ward; his prentis wel hi
 Til he came in to Brugges merily.

Now goth this marchant faste and bef
 About his nede, and bieth, and creanc
 He neither playeth at the dis ne dance
 But as a marchant, shortly for to tell,
 He ledeth his lif; and ther I let him d

The Sonday next the marchant was
 To Seint Denis ycomen is Dan John,
 With croune and berde all fresh and n
 In all the hous ther n'as so litel a knav
 Ne no wight elles, that he n'as ful fair
 For that my Lord Dan John was come
 And shortly to the point right for to g
 This faire wif accordeth with Dan Joh
 That for thise hundred frankes he shul
 Haven hire in his armes bolt upright;
 And this accord performed was in ded
 In mirth all night a besy lif they lede

v. 13246. *Haven hire*] The final *n* in *Haven*
 for the sake of the metre, but unnecessarily,
 may be pronounced before *h* as before a co
 n. on ver. 300.

Til it was day, that Dan John yede his way,
 And bad the meinie farewel, have good day : 13250
 For non of hem, ne no wight in the toun,
 Hath of Dan John right non suspectioun :
 And forth he rideth home to his abbey,
 Or wher him list; no more of him I fey.

This marchant, whan that ended was the faire,
 To Seint Denis he gan for to repaire, 13256
 And with his wif he maketh feste and chere,
 And telleth hire that chaffare is so dere
 That nedes muste he make a chevifance,
 For he was bonde in a recognifance 13260
 To payen twenty thousand sheldes anon :
 For which this marchant is to Paris gon
 To borwe of certain frendes that he hadde
 A certain frankes, and som with him he ladde.
 And whan that he was come in to the toun, 13265
 For gret chiertee and gret affectioun
 Unto Dan John he goth him first to pleye,
 Not for to axe or borwe of him moneye,
 But for to wete and seen of his welfare,
 And for to tellen him of his chaffare, 13270
 As frendes don whan they ben mette in fere.

Dan John him maketh feste and mery chere,
 And he him tolde agen ful specially
 How he had wel ybought and graciously
 (Thanked be God) all hole his marchandise, 13275
 Save that he must in alle manere wise

Maken a chevissance, as for his heste,
And than he shulde ben in joye and reste
Dan John answered, Certes I am fain
That ye in hele be comen home again;
And if that I were riche, as have I blisse,
Of twenty thousand sheldes shuld ye not
For ye so kindly this other day
Lente me gold, and as I can and may
I thanke you, by God and by Seint Jame
But natheles I toke unto our dame,
Your wif, at home, the same gold again
Upon your benche; she wote it wel cert
By certain tokenes that I can hire tell.
Now by your leve I may no longer dwell
Our abbot wol out of this toun anon,
And in his compaignie I muste gon.
Grette wel our dame, myn owen necessite
And farewell, dere cousin! til we mete.

This marchant, which that was ful wel
Creanced hath, and paide eke in Paris
To certain Lombardes, redy in-hir hon
The summe of gold, and gate of hem his
And home he goth mery as a poppingay.
For wel he knew he stood in swiche arra
That nedes muste he winne in that viage
A thousand frankes above all his costage
His wif ful redy mette him at the gat
As she was wont of old usage algate;

And all that night in mirth they ben sette, 13305
For he was riche, and clerely out of dette.

Whan it was day this marchant gan embrace
His wif all newe, and kiste hire in hire face,
And up he goth, and maketh it ful tough.
No more, quod she; by God ye have ynough; 13310
And wantonly agen with him she plaide,
Til at the last this marchant to hire saide :

By God, quod he, I am a litel wrothe
With you my wif, although it be me lothe;
And wote ye why? by God, as that I gesse 13315
That ye han made a manere strangenesse
Betwixen me and my cosin Dan John.

Ye shuld have warned me or I had gon
That he you had an hundred frankes paide
By redy token, and held him evil apaide 13320
For that I to him spake of chevifance :
(Me femed so as by his contenance)
But natheles, by God our heaven king
I thoughte not to axe of him no thing.

I pray thee, wif, ne do thou no more so : 13325
Tell me alway, er that I fro thee go,
If any dettour hath in min absence
Ypaide thee, lest thurgh thy negligence
I might him axe a thing that he hath paide.

This wif was not aferde ne affraide, 13330
But boldely she said, and that anon,
Mary ! I defie that false monk Dan John ;

THE SHIPMAN'S TALE.

ot of his tokenes never a del :
 me certain gold, I wote it wel.
 :vil the dome on his monkes snoute ; 13335
 it wot I wend withouten doute
 had yeve it me because of you,
 therwith min honour and my prow
 rage and eke for *del's chere*
 hath had ful often times here : 13340
 I see I stonde in swiche disjoint
 swere you shortly to the point.
 ve no slakke dettours than am I ;
 I pay you wel and redily
 to day ; and if so be I faille, 13345
 or wif, score it upon my taile,
 al pay as sone as ever I may ;
 my trowth I have on min array,
 in waste, bestowed it every del :
 I have bestowed it so wel 13350
 - honour, for Goddes sake I say
 not wrothe, but let us laugh and play :
 my joly body han to wedde ;
 I n'ill not pay you but a-bedde :
 it me, min owen spouse dere ! 13355
 therward, and maketh better chere.
 narchant saw ther was no remedy,
 to chide it n'ere but a foly,
 the thing may not amended be.
 he said, and I foryeve it thee ; 13360

But by thy lif be ne no more so large;
 Kepe bet my good; this yeve I thee in charge.
 Thus endeth now my Tale, and God us sende
 Taling ynough unto our lives ende.

THE PRIORESSES PROLOGUE.

WEL said, by *corpus Domini*, quod our Hoste; 13365
 Now longe mote thou failen by the coste,
 Thou gentil maister, gentil marinere.
 God give the monke a thousand last quad yere.
 A ha! felawes, beth ware of swiche a jape.
 The monke put in the mannes hode an ape, 13370
 And in his wifes eke, by Seint Austin.
 Draweth no monkes more into your in.

But now passe over, and let us seke aboute
 Who shal now tellen first of all this route
 Another Tale: and with that word he said, 13375
 As curteisly as it had ben a maid;

My Lady Prioreffe, by your lev e,
 So that I wist I shuld you not agreve,
 I wolde demen that ye tellen shold
 A Tale next, if so were that ye wold. 13380
 Now wol ye vouchesauf, may Lady dere?

Gladly, quod she; and saide as ye shul here.

†. 13368. *a thousand last quad yere*] *Last*, in Teut. is *onus*, *farcina*, Kilian; and *quard* in the same language is *malus*: the meaning therefore is, God give the monke *a thousand last* (ever so great a weight) of *quad yere* (bad years, misfortune.) The Italians use *mal anno* in the same sense.

This is to fay, to fingen and to rede, 13430
As fmale children don in hir childhede.

Among thise children was a widewes fone,
A litel clergion, fevene yere of age,
That day by day to fcole was his wone,
And eke also, wheras he fey the image 13435
Of Cristes moder, had he in ufage,
As him was taught, to knele adoun, and fay
Ave Marie as he goth by the way.

Thus hath this widewe hire litel fone ytaught
Our blisful Lady, Cristes moder dere, 13440
To worship ay, and he forgate it naught,
For fely childe wol alway fone lere.
But ay whan I remembre on this matere
Seint Nicholas ftant ever in my prefence,
For he fo yong to Crist did reverence. 13445

This litel childe his litel book lerning,
As he fote in the fcole at his primere,
He *Alma Redemptoris* herde fing,
As children lered hir antiphonere,
And as he dorst he drew him nere and nere, 13450
And herkened ay the wordes and the note,
Til he the firfte vers coude al by rote.

¶ 13444. *Seint Nicholas*] We have an account of the very early piety of this faint in his leſſon, *Bréc. Roman. vi. Decemb.* :
"Cujus viri ſanctitas, quanta futura eſſet, jam ab Incunabulis
"apparuit. Nam infans, cum reliquis diebus lac nutricis frequens
"ſugeret, quartâ et ſextâ ſeriâ (on Wedneſdays and Fridays)
"ſemel dumtaxat, idque veſperi, ſugebat."

Nought wist he what this Latin was to say,
For he so yonge and tendre was of age;
But on a day his felaw gan he pray 13455
To expounden him this song in his langage,
Or telle him why this song was in usage :
This prayde he him to construe and declare
Ful often tyme upon his knees bare.

His felaw, which that elder was than he, 13460
Answerd him thus; This song, I have herd say,
Was maked of our blisful Lady fre,
Hire to salve, and eke hire for to prey
To ben our help and socour whan we dey.
I can no more expound in this matere : 13465
I lerne song; I can but smal grammere.

And is this song maked in reverence
Of Cristes moder? said this innocent :
Now cettes I wol don my diligence
To conne it all or Cristemasse he went, 13470
Though that I for my primer shal be shent,
And shal be beten thries in an houre,
I wol it conne our Ladie for to honoure.

His felaw taught him homeward prively
Fro day to day til he coude it by rote, 13475
And than he song it wel and boldely
Fro word to word according with the note :
Twies a day it passed thurgh his throte,
To scoleward and homeward whan he wente ;
On Cristes moder set was his entente. 13480

As I have said, thurghout the Jewerie
 This litel child, as he came to and fro,
 Ful merily than wold he sing and crye
O Alma Redemptoris! ever mo.

The swetenesse hath his herte perfeld so 1348
 Of Cristes moder, that to hire to pray
 He cannot stint of singing by the way.

Our firste sp, the serpent Sathanas,
 That hath in Jewes herte his waspes nest,
 Up swale and said, O Ebraiike peple, alas! 1349
 Is this to you a thing that is honest,
 That swiche a boy shal walken as him list
 In your despit, and sing of swiche sentence,
 Which is again our lawes reverence?

From thenceforth the Jewes han conspired 1349
 This innocent but of this world to chace:
 An homicide therto han they hired,
 That in an aleye had a privee place,
 And as the child gan forthby for to pace
 This cursed Jew him hent and held him fast, 1350
 And cut his throte, and in a pit him cast.

I say that in a wardrope they him threwe
 Wher as thise Jewes purgen hir entraille.
 O cursed folk! of Herodes alle-newe,
 What may your evil entente you availle? 1351
 Mordre wol out, certain it wol not faille;
 And namely ther the honour of God shal sprede
 The blood out crieth on your cursed dede.

O martyr soulded in virginitee!

Now maist thou singe and solwen ever in on 13510

The white Lamb celestial, quod she,

Of which the gret evangelist Seint John

In Pathmos wrote, which sayth that they that gon

Beforen this Lamb, and singe a song al newe,

That never fleshy woman they ne knewe. 13515

This poure widewe awaiteth al that night

After hire litel childe, and he came nought,

For which as sone as it was dayes light,

With face pale of drede and besy thought

She hath at scole and elles wher him sought, 13520

Til finally she gan so fer aspie

That he last seen was in the Jewerie.

With modres pitee in hire brest enclosed

She goth, as she were half out of hire minde,

To every place wher she hath supposed 13525

By likelihed hire litel child to finde;

And ever on Cristes moder meke and kinde

She cried, and at the lalle thus she wrought,

Among the cursed Jewes she him sought.

She freyneth and she praieth pitoussly 13530

To every Jew that dwelled in thilke place

To telle hire if hire child went ought forth by;

*. 13509. *soulded in virginitee*] Or, (according to the better mss.) *soulded to virginitee* *Soulded* is from the Ft. *soulté*, and that from the Lat. *solidatus*, consolidated, fattened together. In Wicliffe's *N. T.* *Deiis* iii *consolidate* is rendered *sowdidi*. The latter part of this stanza refers to *Rev.* xiv. 3, 4.

They sayden Nay; but Jesu of his grace
 Yave in hire thought, within a litel space,
 That in that place after hire sone she cride 13535
 Ther he was casten in a pit beside.

O grete God, that parformest thy lande
 By mouth of innocentes, lo here thy might!
 This gem of chastitee, this emeraude,
 And eke of martirdome the rubie bright, 13540
 Ther he with throte ycorven lay upright
 He *Alma Redemptoris* gan to singe
 So loude, that all the place gan to ringe.

The Cristen folk that thurgh the strete wente
 In comen for to wondre upon this thing, 13545
 And hastily they for the provost sente:
 He came anon withouten taryng,
 And herieth Crist, that is of heven king,
 And eke his moder, honour of mankind,
 And after that the Jewes let he binde. 13550

This child with pitous lamentation
 Was taken up, singing his song alway,
 And with honour and gret procession
 They carien him unto the next albey;
 His moder swouning by the bere lay: 13555
 Unmethes might the peple that was there
 This newe Rachel bringen fro his bere.

With turment and with shameful deth eche on
 This provost doth thise Jewes for to serve
 That of this morder wiste, and that anon: 13560

He n'olde no swiche cursedneffe observe;
 Evil shal he have that evil wol deserve;
 Therfore with wilde hors he did hem drawe,
 And alter that he heng hem by the lawe.

Upon his bere ay lith this innocent 13565
 Beforn the auter while the masse last,
 And after that the abbot with his covent
 Han spedde hem for to berie him ful fast;
 And whan they holy water on him cast
 Yet spake this child, whan spreint was the holy water,
 And sang *O Alma Redemptoris Mater!* 13571

This abbot, which that was an holy man,
 As monkes ben, or elies ought to be,
 This yonge child to conjure he began,
 And said; O dere child! I halfe then, 13575
 In vertue of the holy trinitee,
 Tell me what is thy cause for to sing,
 Sith that thy throte is cut to my seming.

My throte is cut unto my nekke bon,
 Saide this child, and as by way of kinde 13580
 I shuld have deyed, ye longe time agon,

¶. 13575. *I halfe thee*] *Mss. A. B.* 1, 2, read *I conjure thee*—
 but that seems to be a gloss. *To halfe* signifies properly to em-
 brace round the neck, from the Sax. *hals*, the neck. [See ver.
 10253.] So in *C. L.* ver. 1290.;

I stand and speke, and laugh, and kisse, and halfe.
 It signifies also to salute, *P. P.* fol. 22.;

I halfe hym: *hendlieh*, as I hye frende were.
 And fol. 39, to salute with reverence;

And the eleven *serres halfe d* him all—
 which seems to be the sense here.

But Jesu Crist, as ye in bookes finde,
 Wol that his glory last and be in minde,
 And for the worship of his moder dore
 Yet may I sing. *O Alma* loude and clere. 1358j

This welles of mercie, Cristes moder swete,
 I loved alway, as after any conning;
 And whan that I my lif shulde forlete
 To me she came, and bad me for to sing
 This antem veraily in my dying, 1359o
 As ye han herde; and whan that I had songe
 Me thought she laid a grain upon my tonge.

Wherefore I sing, and sing I mote certain,
 In honour of that blisful maiden free;
 Til fro my tonge of taken is the grain. 1359j
 And after that thus saide she to me;
 My litel child, than wol I fetchen thee,
 Whan that the grain is fro thy tonge ytake:
 Be not agaste, I wol thee not forsake.

This holy monk, this abbot him mene I, 1360o
 His tonge out caught, and toke away the grain,
 And he yave up the gost ful softly.
 And whan this abbot had this wonder sein
 He alte teres trilled adoun as reyne,
 And groff he fell al platte upon the ground, 1360j
 And still he lay as he had ben ybound.

✧ 13597. *than wol I fetchen thee*] The best mss. read *now*, which is scarce reconcilable to any rules of speech. Even with the correction which I have adopted there is a greater confusion in the narration than I recollect to have observed in any other of Chaucer's stories.

The covent lay eke upon the pavement
 Weping and herying Cristes moder dere;
 And after that they risen, and forth ben went,
 And toke away this martir fro his bere, 13619
 And in a tombe of marble stones clere
 Enclosen they his litel body swete:
 Ther he is now God lene us for to mete.

O yonge Hew of Lincoln! slain also
 With cursed Jewes, as it is notable, 13615
 For it n'is but a litel while ago,
 Pray eke for us, we sinful folk unstable,
 That of his mercy God so merciable
 On us his grete mercie multiplie,
 For reverence of his moder Marie. 13620

PROLOGUE TO SIRE THOPAS.

WHAN said was this miracle every man
 As sober was that wonder was to see,
 Til that our Hoste to jape he began,
 And than at erst he loket upon me,
 And saide thus; What man art thou? quod he:
 Thou lokest as thou woldest find an hare, 13626
 For ever upon the ground I see thee stare.

Approche nere, and loke up merily.
 Now ware you, Sires, and let this man have place;
 He in the waste is shapen as wel as I. 13630

*. 13623. *to jape he began*] So ms. E.; some mss. read—
so began.

This were a popet in an arme to enbrace
 For any woman, smal and faire of face.
 He semeth elvish by his contenance,
 For unto no wight doth he daliance.

Say now fomwhat, sin other folk han saide; 13635
 Tell us a Tale of mirthe, and that anon.
 Hoste, quod I, ne be not evil apaide,
 For other Tale certes can I non
 But of a rime I lerned yore agon.
 Ye, that is good. quod he; we shullen here 13640
 Som deintee thing me thinketh by thy chere.

THE RIME OF SIRE THOPAS.

LIS LENETH. Lordinges, in good entent,
 And I wol tel you *verament*
 Of mirthe and of solas,
 Al of a knight was faire and gent 13645
 In bataille and in turnament,
 His name was Sire Thopas.
 Yborne he was in fer contree,
 In Flandres, al beyonde the see,
 At Popering in the place: 13650
 His father was a man ful free,

The Rime of Sire Thopas] A northern Tale of an outlandish knight, purposely uttered by Chaucer in a rime and stile differing from the rest, as though he himself were not the author but only the reporter of the other Tales. *Urre*.

¶ 13650. *At Popering*] Poppering or Poppeling was the name of a parish in the marches of Calais: our famous antiquary Leland was once Rector of it. *Tanner, Bibl. Brit. in v. Leland*.

And lord he was of that contree,
As it was Goddes grace.

Sire Thopas was a doughty swain,
White was his face as paindemaine, 13655
His lippes red as rose;
His rudde is like scarlet in grain,
And I you tell in good certain
He had a femely nose.

His here, his berde, was like safroun, 13660
That to his girdle raught adoun;
His shoon of Cordewane;
Of Brugges were his hosen broun;
His robe was of chekelatoun,
That coste many a Jane. 13665

✧. 13655. *paindemaine*] That this must have been a sort of remarkably white bread is clear enough. Skinner derives it from *panis matutinus*, *pain de matin*; and indeed Du Cange mentions a species of loaves or rolls called *Matinelli*. However, I am more inclined to believe that it received its denomination from the province of Maine, where it was perhaps made in the greatest perfection. I find it twice in a northern tale called *The Freiris of Berwick*, ms. Maitland;

And als that creil is full of broid of *Mane*.
And again—the *Mane breid*.

✧. 13664. *chekelatoun*] The glossaries suppose this word to be compounded of *cheke* and *latoun*, a species of base metal like gold; but it seems rather to be merely a corruption of the Fr. *ciclaton*, which originally signified a circular robe of state, from the Gr. Lat. *cyclos*, and afterwards the cloth of gold of which such robes were generally made. *Du Cange*, in v. *Cyclos*, has produced instances enough of both senses. In fact several mss. read *ciclaton*; and I have no excuse for not having followed them but that I was misled by the authority of Spenser, as quoted by Mr. Warton, *Olf. on Spens.* v. i. p. 194. Upon further consideration I think it is plain that Spenser was mistaken in the

He coude hunt at the wilde dere,
 And ride on hauking for the riwere
 With grey goshawk on honde;
 Therto he was a good archere :
 Of wraffling was ther non his pere . . . ;
 Ther ony ram shuld stonde.

Ful many a maide bright in bour
 They mourned for him *par amour*
 Whan hem were bet to flepe;
 But he was chaste and no lechour,
 And swete as is the bramble flour
 That bereth the red hepe.

And so it fell upon a day,
 Forsoth, as I you tellen may,
 Sire Thopas wold out ride;
 He worth upon his stede gray,
 And in his hond a launcegay,
 A long fwerd by his side.

very foundation of his notion, "that the quilted Irish
 "embroidered with gilded leather" had any resemblance
 "robe of *hectaron*." He supposes that Chaucer is here
 bing Sir Thopas as he went to fight against the giant, in
 of *hectaron*; whereas, on the contrary, it is evident
 Thopas is here described in his usual habit in time of
 his warlike apparel, when he goes to fight against the
 described below, ver. 13756, and foll. and is totally di-

†. 13665. *a Janne*] A coin of Janua, (Genoa), called
 statues *patry halfpence*. See the quotations from Stow
 Warton's *Olf. on Spens.* v. l. p. 150.

†. 13667. *hauking for the riwere*] See the note on ver.

†. 13671. *Ther ony ram*] See the note on ver. 550.

†. 13682. *a launcegay*] The edit. have split this im-
 into two words, as if *gay* were an epithet. It occurs as

He priketh thurgh a faire forest,
 Therin is many a wilde best, 13685
 Ye bothe buck and hare;
 And as he pricked north and est,
 I telle it you, him had almeste
 Betidde a fory care.

Ther springen herbes grete and smale, 13690
 The licoris and the fetewale,
 And many a cloue gilofre,
 And notemuge to put in ale,
 Whether it be moist or stale,
 Or for to lain in cofre. 13695

The briddes singen, it is no nay,
 The sperhawk and the popingay,
 That joye it was to here,

in *Rot. Parl.* 29 H. VI. n. 8.; "And the said Evan then and there
 " with a *launcegay* smote the said William Thresham threughe
 " the body a foote and more, whereof he died." Nicot describes
 a *zagaye* to be a Moorish lance longer and slenderer than a pike,
 from the Span. Arab. *azagāya*.

✧. 13692. *cloue gilofre*] *Clou de girofle*, Fr. *caryophyllus*, Lat.
 a clove-tree, or the fruit of it. Sir J. Mandeville, c. xxvi. de-
 scribing a country beyond Cathaie, says; " And in that coun-
 " tree, and in other contrees thereabouten, growen many trees
 " that beren *cloue gylofres* and notemuges, and grete notes of
 " Ynde, and of canelle and of many other spices."---But the
 most apposite illustration of this passage is a similar description
 in Chaucer's *R. R.* ver. 1360—72—in the original, ver. 1347
 —80. See also a note of an ingenious correspondent in Mr.
 Warton's *Obs. on Spens* v. i. p. 139, ed. 1762, where this pas-
 sage is very properly adduced to shew that The Rime of Sire
 Thopas was intended as a burlesque on the old ballad romances.

The throstel cok made eke his lay,
 The wode dove upon the spray
 He sang ful loude and clere.

Sire Thopas fell in love-longing
 Al whan he herd the throstel sing,
 And priked as he were wood;
 His faire stede in his priking
 So swatte that men might him wring,
 His sides were al blood.

Sire Thopas eke so wery was
 For priking on the softe gras,
 So ficts was his corage,
 That doun he laid him in that place
 To maken his stede som solace,
 And yaf him good forage.

A, Seinte Mary, *benedicite!*
 What aileth this Love at me
 To binde me so fore?
 Me dremed all this night parde
 An elf quene shal my lemman be,
 And slepe under my gore.

An elf quene wol I love ywis,
 For in this world no woman is
 Worthy to be my make || in toun——

ψ. 13722. || *in toun*] These two last words, which are superfluous, are distinguished by a mark of this kind C. 1, and the same mark is repeated in ver. 13743. 13748 15, where the two final syllables are also superfluous. Whether in all these cases the words thus separated be considered as idle additions, for the purpose of

All other women I forsake,
 And to an elf quene I me take
 By dale and eke by doun. 13725

Into his fadel he clombe anon,
 And priked over stile and ston
 An elf quene for to espie,
 Til he so long had riden and gone
 That he fond in a privee wone 13730
 The contree of Faerie.

Wherin he foughte north and south,
 And oft he spied with his mouth
 cing the rhyme which answers to them, or whether some lines
 which originally connected them with the context have been
 lost it is not easy to determine. Upon the latter supposition,
 which I confess appears to me the most probable, we may ima-
 gine that in the present instance the three last lines of this stanza
 and the three first of the following (except the words *in town*)
 have dropped out: in the three other instances only two lines
 and the two first feet of the third may be supposed to be want-
 ing. — In support of this hypothesis it may be observed, that
 in the very next stanza the last line, ver. 13731, and the fol-
 lowing line, in ms. C. 1, stand thus;

The contree of Faerie so wilde,
 For in that contree n'as ther non
 [That to him durst ride or gon]
 Neither wif ne child.

Whether the two lines and part of another which I have in-
 serted before *wilde* from other mss. be genuine I will not be
 positive, but it is very clear, I think, that something is want-
 ing. The line between hooks, which is inserted in ms. C. 1, in
 a later hand, is in ms. HA. D.

*. 13733. *be spied*] Ed. Urr. reads *spired*, I know not upon
 what authority; but the emendation is probable enough, as
 the expression of *spying with the mouth* seems to be too extra-
 vagantly absurd even for this composition. To *spire* or *spere*,
 Gl. Doug. signifies to inquire, from the Sax. *spyrian*. See P. L.
 p. 327. Gower, *Conf. Amant*, fol. 182.

In many a forest wilde,
 For in that contree n'as ther non 13735
 That to him dorst ride or gon,
 Neither wif ne childe.

Til that ther came a gret geaunt,
 His name was Sire Oliphaunt,
 A perilous men of dede; 13740
 He sayde, Child, by Termagaunt
 But if thou prike out of myn haunt
 Anon I flee thy stede || with mace——
 Here is the Quene of Faerie,
 With harpe, and pipe, and simphonie, 13745
 Dwelling in this place.

✱. 13739. *Sire Oliphaunt*] Sir Elephant, a proper name for a giant. Mandeville, p. 283.; "And there ben also many wyde
 " bestes, and nameliche of *olyfauntes*." The very learned and
 ingenious author of Letters on Chivalry, &c. supposes "that
 " the boke of The Giant *Olyphant* and Chylde Thopas was not
 " a fiction of Chaucer's own, but a story of antique fame, and
 " very celebrated in the days of chivalry." I can only say that
 I have not been so fortunate as to meet with any traces of such
 a story of an earlier date than The Canterbury Tales.

✱. 13741. *by Termagaunt*] This Saracen deity in an old romance, ms. Bod. 1624, is constantly called *Tervagan*;

De devant sei fait porter sun dragon,
 E l'ellendant *Tervagan e Mahum*,
 E un ymagene *Apollin* le felon.

And again;

Pleignent lur deus *Tervagan et Mahum*,
 E *Apollin*, dont n'unc rien unt.

This romance, which in the ms. has no title, may possibly be an older copy of one which is frequently quoted by Du Cange under the title of *Le Roman de Roncesvaux*. The author's name was Turold, as appears from the last line;

Ci fait le geste que *Turold* declinet.

He is not mentioned by any of the writers of French literary history that I have seen.

The child sayd, Al so mote I the
To morwe wol I meten thee,
Whan I have min armoure,
And yet I hope *par ma fay*
That thou shalt with this launcegay
Abien it ful soure ||: thy mawe
Shal I perce, if I may,
Or it be fully prime of the day,
For here thou shalt be slawe.

13750

Sire Thopas drow abak ful fast;
This geaunt at him stones cast
Out of a fel staffe sling:
But faire escaped child Thopas,
And all it was thurgh Goddes grace,
And thurgh his faire bering.

13755

Yet listneth, Lordings, to my Tale,
Merier than the nightingale,
For now I wol you rounce
low Sire Thopas with sides smale,
riking over hill and dale,
comen agein to toun.

13760

His mery men commandeth he
maken him bothe game and gle,
nedes must he fighte
h a geaunt with hedes three
paramour and jolitee
n that shone ful brighte.

13765

13770

3758. *a fel staffe sling*] This is the reading of the best mss.
that kind of sling is meant I know not. See *Gloss.* in v.
12.
lume IV.

Do come, he sayd, my minestrales
 And gestours for to tellen tales
 Anon in min arming,
 Of romaunces that ben reales,
 Of popes and of cardinales,
 And eke of love-longing.

†. 13775. *gestours for to tellen tales*] The prop of a *gestour* was to recite tales or jells, which was o the branches of the minstrel's proffession.— *Ming's* *flours* are mentioned together in the following lines, liam of Nassyngton's translation of a religious treati of Wally, ms. *Reg. 17 C. viii. p. 2.*;

I warne you furst at the begynninge
 That I will make no vain carpinge
 Of cedes of armys ne of amours,
 As dus *myng's flours* and *gestours*,
 That makys carpinge in many a place
 Of Octoviane and Iseubrase,
 And of many other jelles,
 And naniely whan they come to festes,
 Ne of the life of Bevy's of Hampton,
 That was a knight of gret renown,
 Ne of Sir Gye of Warwyke,
 All if it might sem men lyke.—

I cite these lines to shew the species of tales related cient *gestours*, and how much they differed from wt call *jells*.

†. 13777. *Of romaunces that ben reales*] So in *Trovan and Gawayn*, ms. *Cott. Galb. E. ix.*;

He fund a knight under a tre;
 Upon a cloth of gold he lay;
 Byfor him sat a ful fayr may;
 A lady sat with tham in fere;
 The maiden red, that thai might here
 A *real romaunce* in that place.—

The original of this title, which is an uncommon to have been this: when the French romances found into Italy, not long before the year 1300, *Crescim.* some Italian undertook to collect together all those Charlemagne and his family, and to form them into body of history. The six first books of this work con

They fet him first the swete win, 13780
 and mede eke in a masclin
 and real spicerie,
 ginger-bred that was ful fin,
 and licoris and eke comin,
 with suger that is trie. 13785
 He didde next his white lere
 cloth of lake fin and clere
 breche and eke a sherte,

death of Peplin. They begin thus; "Qui se comenza la hy-
 storia el *Real di Franza* comenzando a Constantino Impera-
 tore Secondo molte lezende che io ho attrovate e raccolte In-
 sieme." Edit. *Mutina*, 1491, fol. It was reprinted in 1537
 under this title; "*I reali di Franza*, nel quale si contiene la
 generazione di tutti i Re, Duchl, Principi e Baroni di Franza,
 e delli Paladini, colle battaglie da loro fatte," &c. *Quadrio*,
 ed. p. 530. Salviati had seen a ms. of this work written about
 50, [*Crescim.* t. i. p. 330,] and I do not believe that any
 mention of a *real* (or *royal*) romance is to be found in French
 English prior to that date.

v. 13786. *He didde next his white lere*] He did, or put, on
 next his white skin. 'To *don* (*do on*) and *doff* (*do off*) have been
 in use as vulgar words long since Chaucer's time. *Lere* seems
 to be used for skin in *Ifumbras*, ms. *Cott. Cal.* 11, fol. 129.;

His lady is white as wales bone,
 Here *lere* brygte to se upon,
 So faire as blofme on tre—

ough it more commonly signifies only what we call com-
 plexion.—In the romance of *Li Beau Desconus* his arming is
 thus described, fol. 42.;

They caste on him a scherte of felk,
 A gypell as white as melk
 In that femely sale,
 And syzt an hawberk brygt,
 That richely was adygt
 With mayles thykke and smale.—

And next his shert an baketon,
And over that an habergeon . . . 13790
For percing of his herte;

And over that a fin hauberk
Was all ywrought of jewes werk,
Ful strong it was of plate,
And over that his cote-armoure, 13795
As white as is the lily floure,
In which he wold debate.

His sheld was all of gold so red,
And therin was a bores hed,
A charboucle beside; 13800
And ther he swore on ale and bred
How that the geaunt shuld be ded,
Betide what so betide.

His jambeux were of cuirbouly,
His fwerdes sheth of ivory, 13805

¶ 13793. *of jewes werk*] I do not recollect to have seen the Jews celebrated any where as remarkable artificers; I am therefore inclined to adopt an explanation of this word which I find in a note of the learned editor of *Ancient Scottish Poems*, p. 230.3: "This *jete*, not this Jew, but this juggler or magician. The words to *jete*, to deceive, and *jete* *je-pau-ly*, "juggling tricks, are still in use. In Lord Ryndford's inf. p. 136, "there is a fragment of a sort of fairy tale, where *Reine is the* "queen of *jeteis* means she is the queen of magicians."—According to this explanation *jewes werk* may signify the work of magicians or fairies.

¶ 13800. *A charboucle*] *A charboucle* (*esca-boucle*, Fr.) was a common bearing. *Gaithin's Heraldry*, p. 100.

¶ 13804. *cuirbouly*] *Cuir bouilly*, of which Sir Thopas's boots were made, was also applied to many other purposes. See *ibid.* v. i. c. 110, 120, and v. iv. c. 19. In this last passage he says

His helme of latoun bright,
 His sadel was of rewel bone,
 His bridel as the sonne shone,
 Or as the mone light.

His spere was of fin cypres, 13810
 That bodeth werre and nothing pees,
 The hed ful sharpe yground:
 His stede was all dapple gray,
 It goth an aumble in the way
 Ful softely and round || in londe—— 13815
 Lo, Lordes min, here is a fit,
 If ye wol ony more of it
 To telle it wol I fond.

Now hold your mouth *pour charitee*
 Bothe knight and lady fre, 13820
 And herkeneth to my spell;
 Of bataille and of chevalrie,
 Of ladies love and druerie,
 Anon I wol you tell.

the Saracens covered their targes with "*cuir bouilli de Capadocce*, ou nul fer ne peut prendre n'attacher; si le cuir n'est trop échaufé."

✧. 13807. *rewel bone*] What kind of material this was I profess myself quite ignorant. In the *Turnam. of Tottenham*, ver. 75, [*Anc. Poet.* v. li. p. 18.] Tibby is introduced with a garland on her head full of *ruell bones*. The derivation in Gloss. *Urr.* of this word from the Fr. *riolé*, diversly coloured, has not the least probability. The other, which deduces it from the Fr. *rouelle*, *rotula*, the whirlbone or kneepan, is more plausible, though, as the glossarist observes, that sense will hardly suit here.

✧. 13823. *Of ladies love and druerie*] I have taken the liberty here of departing from the mss. which read——
And of ladies love druerie.

Men speken of romaunces of yris, 13825
 Of Hornchild and of Ipotis,
 Of Bevis and Sire Guy,
 Of Sire Libeux and Pleindamour,
 But Sire Thopas he bereth the flour
 Of real chevalrie. 13830

His goode stede he al bestrode,
 And forth upon his way he glode
 As sparke out of bronde;
 Upon his crest he bare a tour,
 And therin stiked a lily flour; 13835
 God shilde his corps fro shonde!

Upon second thoughts I am more inclined to throw out *lost* as a gloss for *druerie*, and to read thus;

And of ladies druerie.

Druerie is strangely explained in Gloss. *Urr. sobriety, modesty*: it means courtship, gallantry.

†. 13828. *Of Sire Libeux*] His romance is in *ms. Cott. Cal. M.* In the 12th stanza we have his true name and the reason of it. King Arthur speaks;

Now clepeþ him alle thus,
Jy Beau Desienus,
 For the love of me,
 Than may ye wete arowe,
The faire unknowne
 Cemes so hatte he.

Ibid. Pleindamour] This is the reading of the *ms.* and I know not why we should change it for *Blandamour*, as both names sound equally well.

†. 13833. *As sparke*] The same simile is in *Isumbras*, fol. 130. b.;

He spronge forth, *as sparke* on [*f. ef*] glode.

Glode in the preceding verse is probably for *glowde*, glowed, from the Sax. *glowan, candere*.

And for he was a knight auntrous
 He n'olde slepen in non hous,
 But ligen in his hood;
 His brighte helth was his wanger, 13840
 And by him baited his destre
 Of herbes fin and good.

Himself drank water of the well,
 As did the knight Sire Percivell
 So worthy under wede, 13845
 Til on a day —————

PROLOGUE TO MELIBEUS.

No more of this for Goddes dignitee,
 Quod our Hoste, for thou makest me
 So wery of thy veray lewednesse,
 That al so wifly God my soule blesse 13850

✧. 13844. *Sire Percivell*] The romance of *Perceval le Galois*, or *de Galis*, was composed in octosyllable French verse by Chrestein de Troyes, one of the oldest and best French romancers before the year 1191. *Fauchet*, l. ii. c. x. It consisted of above sixty thousand verses, [*Bibl. des Rom.* t. ii, p. 250.] so that it would be some trouble to find the fact which is probably here alluded to. The romance under the same title in French prose, printed at Paris 1530, fol. can be only an abridgement, I suppose, of the original poem.

✧. 13845. *So worthy under wede*] This phrase occurs repeatedly in the romance of *Emaré*;

fol. 70. b. Than sayde that *worthy unther wede*.

— 74. b. The childe was *worthy unther wede*,
 And fate upon a nobyl fiede

See also fol. 71, b. 73, a.

Min eres aken of thy draffy speche.
 Now swiche a rime the devil I beteche;
 This may wel be rime dogerel, quod he.

Why so? quod I; why wolt thou letten n
 More of my Tale than an other man,
 Sin that it is the beste rime I can?

By God, quod he, for plainly at o word
 Thy draffy riming is not worth a tord:
 Thou dost nought elles but dispendest time.
 Sire, at o word thou shalt no lenger rime.
 Let see wher thou canst tellen ought in gefit
 Or tellen in prose fomwhat at the leste

✧. 13852. *the devil I beteche*] I betake (recomme
 to the devil. See ver. 3748.;

My soule betake I unto Sathanas—

and ver. 8037, 17256, where the preposition is omit
To take, in our old language, is also used for *to take*
 See ver. 13334.;

He take me certain gold, I wote it wel.

And compare ver. 13224, 13286.—The change of
beteche was not so great a license formerly as it wor
 as *bande* seem once to have been pronounced in near
 manner. See ver. 3307, 8, 11, 12, where *cerk* is mad
 to *cherche* and *clerk*. It may be observed too that
 had but one verb, *tæcan*, to signify *capere* and *de*
 though our ancestors, even before Chaucer's time
 that single verb into two, *to take* and *to teke*, and
 guished each from the other by a different mode o
 yet the compound verb *betake*, which according to
 of inflexion ought to have formed its past time *bero*
 it often, I believe, *betoghte*, as if no such distinctio
 established. See *K. R.* ver. 4438.; *Game'yn*, 666. 'I
 past time *betoke* occurs in ver. 16009.

In which ther be som mirthe or som doctrine.

Glädly, quod I; by Goddes swete pine
I wol you tell a litel thing in prose 13865
That oughte liken you, as I suppose,
Or elles certes ye be to dangerous.
It is a moral Tale vertuous,
Al be it told somtime in sondry wise
Of sondry folk, as I shal you devise. 13870

As thus; ye wot that every evangelist
That telleth us the peine of Jesu Crist
Ne saith not alle thing as his felaw doth;
But natheles hir sentence is al soth,
And alle accorden as in hir sentence, 13875
Al be ther in hir telling difference;
For som of hem say more and som say lesse
Whan they his pitous passion expresse;
I mene of Mark and Mathew, Luke and John,
But douteles hir sentence is all on. 13880
Therefore, Lordinges all, I you beseeche,
If that ye thinke I vary in my speche,
As thus, though that I telle som del more
Of proverbes than ye han herde before
Comprehended in this litel tretise here, 13885
To enforcen with the effect of my matere,
And though I not the same wordes say
As ye han herde, yet to you alle I pray

† 13879. *I mene of Mark and Mathew*] The conjunction *and* has been added for the sake of the metre without authority, and perhaps without necessity, as *Mark* was probably written by Chaucer *Mark*, and pronounced as a dissyllable.

Blameth me not, for as in my sentence
 Shal ye nowher finden no difference
 Fro the sentence of thilke tretise lite
 After the which this mery Tale I write;
 And therfore herkeneth what I shal say,
 And let me tellen all my Tale I pray.

THE TALE OF MELIBEUS

A Younge man called Melibeus, mighty and ri-
 gate upon his wif that called was Prudence a d
 which that called was Sophie.

Upon a day befell that he for his disport
 into the felde him to playe. His wif and
 doughter hath he left within his hous, of wh
 dores weren fast yshette. Foure of his olde fo
 espied, and setten ladders to the walles of h
 and by the windowes ben entred, and beten
 and wounded his doughter with five mortal v
 in five sondry places; this is to say, in hire feet
 hondes, in hire eres, in hire nose, and in hire
 and lesten hire for dede. and wenten away.

The Tale of Melibeus] Prudence, the discreet wife of
 persuadeth her husband to patience, and to receive hi
 to mercie and grace. A Tale full of moralitie, wherein
 and low may learne to governe their affections. Spe

The Tale of Melibeus] Mr. Thomas has observed that
 seems to have been written in blank verse. [*Mss. note.*
 ed. *Urr.* in *Brit. Mus.*] It is certain that in the former
 we find a number of blank verses intermixed in a muc
 proportion than in any of our Author's other prose writ
 this poetical style is not, I think, remarkable beyon
 four or five pages.

Whan Melibeus retorned was into his hous, and sey al this meschief, he like a madman rending his clothes gan to wepe and crie.

Prudence his wif, as fer forth as she dorste, besought him of his weping for to stint : but not forthy he gan to crie and wepen ever lenger the more.

This noble wif Prudence remembred hire upon the sentence of Ovide*, in his book that cleped is The Remedie of Love, wheras he saith, He is a fool that distourbeth the moder to wepe in the deth of hire childe til she have wept hire fille, as for a certain time ; and than shal a man don his diligence with amiable wordes hire to reconforte, and preye hire of hire weping for to stinte. For which reson this noble wif Prudence suffred hire housbond for to wepe and crie as for a certain space, and whan she saw hire time she sayde to him in this wise : Alas ! my Lord, quod she, why make ye yourself for to be like a fool ? forsothe it apperteineth not to a wise man to maken swiche a forwe. Yourre doughter with the grace of God shal warish and escape. And al were it so that she right now were dede, ye ne ought not as for hire deth youreself to de-

* *the sentence of Ovide*] *Rem. Am.* 125. ;

Quis matrem, nisi mentis inops, in funere nati

Flere vetat ! &c.

It would be a laborious and thankless task to point out the exact places of all the quotations which are made use of in this treatise, I shall therefore confine my observations of that kind to a few passages, which are taken from authors not commonly to be met with.

man (quod he) shulde of his weping stinte
so gret a cause for to wepe? Jesu Crist our
self wepte for the deth of Lazarus his frend.
answered; Certes wel I wote attempre wep
thing defended to him that sorweful is amon
forwe, but it is rather graunted him to wep
posse Poule unto the Romaines writeth,
rejoyce with hem that maken joye, and we
swiche folk as wepen. But though attempre
be ygranted, outrageous weping certes is
Mesure of weping shulde be considered afte
that techeth us Senek. Whan that thy fren
(quod he) let not thin eyen to moiste ben o
to muche drie; although the teres comen to
let hem not falle And whan thou hast so
frend do diligence to get agein another fre
this is more wisdom than for to wepe for

it sorwe in herte sleeth ful many a man. Salomon
 th, that right as mouthes in the shepes fleese anoien
 the clothes, and the smale wormes to the tree, right
 anoieth sorwe to the herte of man; wherfore us
 ght as wel in the deth of oure children as in the losse
 oure goodes temporel have patience.

Remembre you upon the patient Job; whan he hadde
 l his children and his temporel substaunce, and in
 body endured and received ful many a grevous tri-
 lation, yet sayde he thus; Oure Lord hath yeve it
 me, oure Lord hath beraft it me; right as oure
 ord hath wold right so is it don; yhicssed be the
 me of oure Lord. To thise foresaide thinges answer-
 Melibeus unto his wif Prudence: All thy wordes
 uod he) ben trewe, and therto profitable, but trewe-
 min herte is troubled with this sorwe so greuously
 at n'ot what to don. Let calle (quod Prudence)
 yn trewe frendes alle, and thy linage, which that ben
 fe, and telleth to hem your cas, and herkeneth what
 cy saye in conseilling, and governe you after hir sen-
 ace. Salomon saith, Werke all thinges by conseil and
 ou shalt never repente.

Than by conseil of his wif Prudence this Melibeus
 : callen a gret congregation of folk. as surgens,
 ifficiens, olde folk and yonge, and som of his olde
 emies reconciled (as by hir seruabant) to his love and
 his grace: and therwithal ther comen some of his
 igheboures that diden him reverence more for drede

than for love, as it happeth oft: ther comen al many subtil flaterers, and wise advocats lerned in lawe.

And whan thise folk togeder assembled were Melibeus in forweful wise shewed hem his cause by the manere of his speche it semed that in he had a cruel ire, ready to don vengeance upon feos, and sodeinly desired that the werre shuld binne, but natheles yet axed he his conseil upon matere. A surgien, by licence and assent of swiweren wise, up rose, and unto Melibeus sayde moun here.

Sire, (quod he) as to us surgions apperteinet we do to every wight the beste that we can, wherben withholden, and to our patient that we do no damage, wherfore it happeth many time and oft whan twey men han everich wounded other with a surgien he leth hem both, wherfore unto our art is not pertinent to norice werre. ne parties to supplye but certes as to the warishing of youre dought be it so that perilously she be wounded, we shuld content us besinesse fro day to night, that with the

as, maden semblant of weping, and empeired and a-
 regged muchel of this matere, in preying gretly Me-
 bee of might, of power, of richesse, and of frendes,
 despising the power of his adversaries, and saiden out-
 ly that he anon shulde wreken him on his foos, and
 begynnen werre.

Up rose than an advocat that was wise, by leve and
 y conseil of other that were wise, and sayde; Lord-
 ges, the nede for the which we ben assembled in this
 lace is a ful hevie thing, and an heigh matere, be-
 cause of the wrong and of the wikkednesse that hath
 e don, and eke by reson of the grete damages that in
 ime coming ben possible to fallen for the same cause,
 and eke by reson of the gret richesse and power of the
 parties bothe, for the which reasons it were a ful gret
 peril to erren in this matere; wherfore, Melibeus, this
 is oure sentence: we conseille you, aboven alle thing,
 hat right anon thou do thy diligence in keping of thy
 propre persone in swiche a wise that thou ne want non
 spie ne watche thy body for to save; and after that
 we conseille that in thin hous thou sette suffisant gar-
 nison, so that they moun as wel thy body as thy hous
 defende: but certes for to meeven werre, ne sodenly
 for to do vengeance, we moun not deme in so litel
 time that it were profitable; wherfore we axen leifer
 and space to have deliberation in this cas to deme; for
 the comune proverbe saith thus, He that sone demeth
 sone shal repente; and eke men sain that thilke juge

THE TALE OF MELIBEUS.

that sone understondeth a matere and jugement
er: for al be it so that al taryng be unuysful,
it is not to repreve in yeving of jugement, ne
geance taking, whan it is sufficient and resonable:
at shewed our Lord Jesu Crist by ensample, for
that the woman that was taken in advourie
ought in his presence, to knowen what shuld be
ith hire persone, al be it that he wist wel him-
at that he wolde answer, yet he wolde he not
re sodeinly, but he wolde have deliberation, and
ground he wrote twies: and by thise causes we
eliberation, and we shuln thyn by the grace of
onseille the thing that shal be profitable.

sterte than the yonge folk at ones, and the most
of that compaignie han scorned this olde wise
and begonnen to make noyse, and fuden; Right
hile that iren is hot men shulde smite, right so
shuldo wreken hir wrouges while that they han
and newe: and with loude voys they criden
! werre! Up rose tho on of this olde wise, and
his hand made countenaunce that men shuld
hem stille and yeve him audience. Lordinges,
he) ther is ful many a man that crieth Werre!
that wote ful litel what werre amounteth.
at his beginning hath so gret an entring and
e, that every wight may enter whan him liketh,
help find werre; but certes what end that shal
it is not light to know; for sodeinly whan that
is ones begonne there is ful many a child un-

borne of his moder that shal sterue yong by cause of
thilke werre, other elles live in forwe, and dien in
wretchednesse; and therfore or that any werre be be-
gonne men must have gret conseil and gret delibera-
tion. And whan this olde man wende to enforcen his
tale by resons, wel nie alle at ones begonne they to
rise for to breken his tale, and bidden him ful oft his
wordes for to abregge; for sothly he that precheth to
hem that listen not heren his wordes his sermon hem
anoieth; for Jesus Sirak sayth that musike in weping
is a noious thing; this is to sayn, as muche availleth
to speke beforn folk to which his speche anoieth as to
singe besorne him that wepeth. And whan this wise
man saw that him wanted audience al shamefast he
sette him doun agein: for Salomon saith, Ther as thou
nemayst have non audience enforce thee not to speke.
I see wel (quod this wise man) that the comune pro-
verbe is soth, that good conseil wanteth whan it is most
nede.

Yet had this Melibeus in his conseil many folk that
prively in his ere conseilled him certain thing, and
conseilled him the contrary in general audience. Whan
Melibeus had herd that the grettest partie of his coun-
seil were accorded that he shulde make werre, anon
he consented to hire conseilling, and fully affirmed his
sentence. Than Dame Prudence, whan that she saw
how that hire hosbonde shope him for to awreke him
on his foos, and to beginne werre, she in ful humble

wife, whan she saw hire time, sayde him these wordes: My Lord, (quod she) I you beicche, as hertly as I dare and can, ne haste you not to faste, and for alle guerdons as yeve me audience; for Piers Alphonse† sayth, Who

† *Piers Alphonse*] He calls himself *Petrus Alfonsus* in his *Dialogus contra Iudeos*, ms. Harl. 3561. He there informs us that he was himself originally a Jew, but converted and baptized in the year 1106, in July, *die natalis Spp. Petri et Pauli*, upon which account he took the name of *Peter*; "Fuit autem pater meus "spiritualls *Alfonsus*, gloriatus Hispanie Imperator," (the first King of Arragon of that name and the seventh of Castile) — "quare, nomen ejus prefato nomini meo apponens, *Petrus*." "propterea nomen imposui." After his conversion he wrote the dialogue above-mentioned, and also another work which is here quoted by Chaucer, and of which therefore I think myself obliged to give some account.—It is extant in ms. in many libraries, but the only copy which I have had an opportunity of examining is in the Museum, *Harl. Reg. to B. xii.*: it is then entitled *Petri Alfonsi de Clericali disciplina*, and begins thus "Dixit Petrus Alfonsus, servus compositor huius libri—Libellum competi partim ex proverbis et catenariis, partim ex fabulis et versibus, et partim ex animadversionibus et volucrum similitudinibus."—After a short poem he enters thus upon his main subject; "Ergo igitur philosophus, quod lingua Arabice cognominatur *Ehris*, dixit illi suis; Time inmunditiam negotiationis." &c.—The work then proceeds in the form of a dialogue between the philosopher and his friend, in which the precepts of the former are for the most part illustrated by appropriate fables and examples. *Ehris* (according to *Isidore*, in v.) was the name of Enoch among the Arabians; who attribute to him many fabulous compositions. Whether *Alfonso* had any of them in his view I knew not, nor is it material: the manner and style of his work show both many marks of an eastern original, and one of his Stories (*of a trick put upon a thief*) is entirely taken from the *Calila u Dinnas**, a cele-

* I found the date of the *Calila u Dinnas* to be by no means certain; but that it was translated out of Arabic into Greek by Simon between several years before *Alfonso* wrote. The story mentioned

so that doth to thee outhere good or harme haste thee
not to quite it, for in this wise thy frend wol abide, and

brated collection of oriental apologues. — In this part of the world, however, Alfonso may be considered as an original writer. His work was very early translated into French verse. In an old copy, ms. Reg. 16 E. viii. the translation is entitled *Proverbes Peres Anjorise*; and there is a short introduction by the translator, in which he says, “Voil Peres Anjors translatier.” — In a later copy, ms. Bod. 1687, the introduction is omitted, but the poem is entitled *Le Romaunz Peres Anjor comment il aprist et ch' il li sun fils belement*. — In another copy, ms. Harl. 4538, there is neither introduction nor title, so that by the mere omission of transcribers the French translation has put on the appearance of an original work, and is quoted as such by M. le

here is not in that copy of Symeon's translation which Starkius has printed under the title of *Specimen Sapientie Isrlaorum*, Berolin 1697, 8vo, but it is in ms. Bod. 510, and in the Lat. version of Symeon's book which Pouffin published by way of Appendix to the history of Pachymenes, *inter Script. Hæc. Byzant.* The various titles under which this eastern romance has passed through Europe may be seen in the preface of Starkius, and in *Fabr. Bib. Græc.* vi. 460, and x. 324, though neither of them has taken notice of an Italian translation or imitation by Firenzulo, entitled *Discorsi degli animalii*. See his *Progr. Fir.* 1548. The other Italian version, which they mention, by Domi, was translated into English under the title of *The Moral Philosophy of Domi out of Italian by Sir Thomas North Knight*, 4to, 1601, [*Amst.* p. 433,] and is alluded to, I suppose, by Jonson in his *Epi. ene.* p. 494, by the name of *Dome's Philosophy*, though he has made the speaker Sir Arn. La-Fool (whether designedly or not I am uncertain) confounds it with Reynard the Fox. Since they wrote there has been an ed. at Paris in 1724 with this title, *Contes et fables indiennes, de Nisipai et de Lokman, traduites D'Ali Bekelbi-Ben-Salib, Auteur Turc. Ouvrage posthume par M. Galland.* The words *et de Lokman* in this title I suspect to have been added by the bookseller, for I cannot find any thing of Lokman in the work itself. Perhaps M. Galland might have intended to annex the fables of Lokman, but was prevented by death. For the rest, there is no material difference between this edition and a former French version, which was made from the Persick, and printed in 1698, except in the style: they both differ very considerably from the Greek. — I will just state notice that one of the fables in the Greek, p. 444, has been inserted (but with great variations) by Matthew Paris in his *History*, ed. ann. 1195, as a parable which Rich. I. after his return from the east was used frequently to relate *in gratia redarguende*.

thin enemy shal the lenger live in drede. The proverb sayth, He hatheth wel that wilely can abide; and the wikked hath is no profite.

Comtede Caylus in his *Memoire sur les Fabliaux*, [*Acad. des Ins.* t. xx. p. 361.] under the general title of *Le chassolement du peauhis*. The fable of the Sheep, of which M. de Caylus has then given an abstract, is in the Latin Alfonsus, fab. ix. I will add that the same fable, in the *Cento Nouvelle Antiche*, N. xxx. is furnished upon *uno novellatore di messer Azzolino*; and Cervante changing the sheep for goats, has put it into the mouth of Sancho, *Don Quix.* p. I. c. xx. Cervantes indeed has also altered the application of it, but I think not for the better.—I am inclined to believe that Hebers, the author or translator of the French romance called *Dolopatous*, in the beginning of the 13th century, had read this work of Alfonsus perhaps before it was translated into French. The story of the stone thrown into the well, *Decameron*, vii. 4, which Fauchet supposes Boccaccio have taken from Hebers, is in Alfonsus, fab. xi.: it is not in the Greek Syntipas †, which I imagine to have been the ground-

† The only copy which I have ever seen of Syntipas is in ms. *Paris* 5560. I should guess that it agreed in substance with that which Cange made use of in his *Glossarium Med. et Inf. Gr. Ital.*, [see *Index Auctorum*, p. 33,] though it seems to be of a later age and is more depraved dialect. They differ in this, that the Hæleian copy is to have been translated from the Persian [απὸ περσικῆς βουλῆς. Πωκτικὴν γλωτταν,] and Du Cange's from the Syriack [συνταξις βουλῆς, ὡς εἶχεν αὐταὶς διέξεναι. ἐκ τῆς ἑλληνιστικῆς γλωτταν,] However, I would not vouch that it really was translated either from the Persian or Syriack. Among the oriental mss. in the Bodleian library the catalogue mentions one in Turkish. [*Recueil*, 31.] *uxore Chafikini Turcarum regis consilio*, which I suspect to contain the same story, translated perhaps from the Greek or from the Italian *Lisio*.—Syntipas is said to have been printed at Venice, *Lingua Græca vulgari*, *Fabrie. Bibl. Gr.* x. 515. How far that edition may agree with the Hæleian ms. I cannot say, having never seen it: to judge the ms. only it seems probable that if Syntipas was the groundwork the *Dolopatous* differs much more departed as much from his character: the succeeding compilers of *Le roman de Melibeus* and of *Le roman de Hebers*. Neither the 9th nor the 10th ed. in the text, nor the two others which

This Melibee answered unto his wif Prudence ; I purpose not (quod he) to werken by thy conseil for

work of the Dolopatos, and therefore I presume that it was inserted by Hebers, (or the monk whose Latin he translated and possibly from Alfonsus, at least it is not more probable that Boccace should take it from Hebers than from Alfonsus, with whose work he appears to have been well acquainted. One of his novels, *Decam.* vii. 6, is plainly copied from thence, *fab.* viii. and his celebrated novel of the two friends Tito and Gylippo, *Decam.* x. 8, is borrowed, with hardly any variation in the names of persons and places, from the 2d of Alfonsus, or, which is the same thing, from the *Giota Romana*, into which col-

Faucher refers to as borrowed by Boccace from Hebers, *viz.* *Decam.* iii. 2, and viii. 8, are to be found in the ms. Syntipas. On the other hand the story in *The Decam.* vii. 6, which is told in the text to be probably copied from Alfonsus, is also in Syntipas, though from the silence of Faucher we may presume that it was not in the Dolopatos.—The plan of *Syntipas* is exactly the same with that of *L'Espey Sage*, the Italian *Espey*, the French *Espey*, and our little story-book *Le Seven Wise Masters*, except that instead of Dioclesian of Rome the king is called Cyrus of Persia, and instead of one tale each of the philosophers tells two. This last circumstance is an accident, I think, for the originality of *Syntipas*, and another is borrowed from the insipidity of the greater part of the tales. The only one of them which, as I remember, is retained in the modern French, is that of the knight who in a fit of governor's passion killed a lamb called *Ag*, *Lancel.* iii. 8. It is plainly borrowed from a story in the *Giota Romana*, p. 359 of the Gr. translation, though there instead of a dog the animal is called *Nyctem*, by some mistake, as I suspect, of the translator.—There is a translation of this romance, in English sufficiently verse, not later than Chaucer's time, as I imagine, in ms. *Colton*, *Cambr.* ii. ix. It is entitled *Le Priere of the Seven Masters*, and agrees exactly with *L'Espey Sage* de Rome in French prose in ms. *Harl.* 3890.

The title in the printed copies is *Ex Cestis Romanorum historie notaliter collecta de dicto libro Espey tractatus cum applicationibus moralibus et legalibus*. The author of this strange work is quite unknown, nor is it easy to fix with precision the time of its composition. Upon the whole I have no doubt that it is of a later date than Alfonsus's, the beginning of the thirteenth, and I should even say that it was composed about the end of that century, or the beginning of the next.—Three copies of it I have seen in MSS., and some English names in the 17th, which were written in several mss. of the fourteenth, being there substituted with the latter XVII, though they have been left

seilling wolde change thinges that ben ordeined and affirmed by so many wise men. Secondly, I say that all women ben wicke, and non good of hem all; for

honourable to Alfonso, has been very prejudicial to his fame: for instance, a translation, as I suppose, of his last mentioned story of the two friends is entitled, in a ms. of Lydgate belonging to the late Dr. Arkew, *A Tale of two Marchants of Egypt and of Baldad, ex Gestis Romanorum*, [Mr. Farmer's Notes on *The Merch. of Ven.* last edit. of *Shakefp. App.* ii.] as if the tale had first appeared in that work. However somebody, not long after the invention of printing as I guess, did a little more justice to Alfonso, by putting together his principal tales, and inserting them, with his name, in a collection of the fables of Æsop and other eminent fabulists in Latin. This collection was soon turned into French, and from that version Caxton made the translation into English which has been mentioned in the *Discourse*, &c. n. 22. Caxton's book has been reprinted more than once: I have seen an edition of it in 1647, and I doubt whether there has been one since.

meron, x. 1. See also *Gower, Conf. Amant.* b. v. fol. 96, 7.—Ch. 118 is from Alfonso: it is repeated in the *C. N. A.* nov. 84.—Ch. 119 (ms. 102) has been verified by *Gower, Conf. Amant.* b. v. fol. 110, b. It has been mentioned in note *, p. 138, as taken originally from the *Sapientia Indorum*, p. 444.—Cn. 124 (ms. 20) makes the last novel of the *C. N. A.*—Ch. 157 makes the 50th novel of the *C. N. A.* but it may have been taken from Alfonso.—Ch. 171 (ms. 55) is the story of the two friends mentioned in the text.—Ch. 48, ms. contains the story of the Caskets; and ch. 99, ms. that of the Bond, the two principal incidents in Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*. It is said in the additional note, *App.* ii. last ed. of *Shakefp.* that Ser Giovanni had worked up these two stories into one, as they are in the play: but that is a mistake which I beg leave to retract here. The novel of Ser Giovanni [*Pecorene Giorn.* iv. nov. 1.] is founded only upon the story of the Bond; it is probable therefore that Shakespeare took the story of the Caskets from the English *Gesta Romanorum*, and ingrafted it upon the other.—Ch. 98, ms. is copied with very little alteration in the *C. N. A.* nov. 68.—Many more stories in *Gower*, which seem to be founded upon ancient history, will appear upon examination to be taken from this book. It would lead me too far to particularize those which Lydgate, Occleve, &c. and other later writers, have borrowed from it: I will only mention a few for the credit of the collection, that ch. 80 contains the complete fable of Parnell's Hermit.

of a thousand men, saith Salomon, I found a good man; but certes of alle women good woman found I never. And also, certes if I governed me by thy conseil it shulde seme that I had yve thee over me the maistrie; and God forbode that it so were; for Jesus Sirak sayth, that if the wif have the maistrie she is contrarious to hire husband; and Salomon sayth, Never in thy lif to thy wif, ne to thy child, ne to thy frend, ne yve no power over thy self; for better it were that thy children axe of thee thinges that hem nedeth than thou for thy self in the handes of thy children. And also if I wol werche by thy consailing certes it must be sometime secree, til it were time that it be knowen, and this ne may not be if I shulde be conseilled by thee. [For it is written †, The janglerie of women ne can no thing hilde save that which they wote not; after the philosophre sayth, In wikked conseil women venquishen men: and for this reison I ne owe not to be conseilled by thee.]

† [*For it is written* 32nd.] What is included between heo's is wanting in all the MSS. which I have examined: it is plainly necessary to the sense, as it shows us what the fourth and fifth versions of Melibœus write to which Prudence replies: have therefore inserted as literal a translation as I might. Chaucer might have made of the following passage in the F. Melibœe, ms. Reg. 10, C. viii. "Car il est clerz et, la jenglerie des femmes ne jure riens celer fors ce qu'elle ne fait. Après le philosophe dit, en mauvais conseil les femmes vainquent les hommes, et par ces raisons je ne dois point user de conseil."

Whan Dame Prudence, ful debonairly and with gret patience, had herd all that hire housbonde liked for to say, than axed she of him licence for to speke, and sayde in this wise: My Lord, (quod she) as to your first reson it may lightly ben answerd, for I say that it is no folie to chaunge conseil whan the thing is chaunged, or ellys whan the thing semeth otherwise than it sermed afore. And, moreover, I say though that ye have sworne and behight to performe your emprise, and neverthcles ye weive to performe thilke same emprise by just cause, men shuld not say therfore ye were a lyer ne forsworn; for the book sayth that the wise man maketh no lesing whan he turneth his corage for the better. And al be it that your emprise be establisshed and ordeined by gret multitude of folk, yet thar you not accomplish thilke ordinance but you liketh, for the trouthe of thinges and the profit ben rather sounnden in fewe folk that ben wise and ful of reson than by gret multitude of folk ther every man cryeth and clattereth what him liketh; sothly swiche multitude is not honest. As to the second reson, wheras ye say that alle women ben wicke; save your grace, certes ye despise alle women in this wise, and he that all despiseth, as saith the book, all desplefeth. And Senek saith, that who so wol have sapience shal no man dispise, but he shal gladly teche the science that he can without presumption or pride, and swiche thinges as he nought can he shal not ben ashamed to lere hem,

Volume IV.

N

and to enquest of lesse folk than himselfe; that ther hath ben ful many a good man highly be proued; for certes, Sire, our Lord Is n'olde never handscinded to be harmed of all women had be wicked; and after that for bountee that is in women our Lord Jesu Crist he was risen from deth to lif appered rather a man than so his apostles. And though that I sayde he found neuer no good woman, it foloweth therefore that all women be wicked; for they he ne found no good woman, for as many another hath founde many a woman ful good and trellis; peraventure, the intent of Salomon was that in soverain bountee he found no woman; this is that ther is no wight that hath soveraine bountee God alone, as he himself recordeth in his Euan forther is no creature so good that him he wante what of the perfection of God that is his maker. thridde reson is this; ye say that if that ye govern my conseil it shulde seme that ye had yeve me the stree and the lordship of your person. Sire, for grace, it is not so; for if so were that no man shoulde be consailed but only of hem that han lordship an stree of his person men n'olde not be consailed then; for sothly thilke man that asketh conseil of pou yet hath he free choise whether he wol wete that conseil or non. And as to your fourth ther as ye sain that the janglerie of women ca

iges that they wot not, as who so sayth that a woman can not hide that she wote; Sire, thise wordes ben erstonde of women that ben jangleresses and wicked of which women men sain that three thinges dri- a man out of his hous, that is to say, smoke, drop- of raine, and wicked wives; and of swiche wo- Salomon sayth, that a man were better dwell in rt than with a woman that is riotous: and, Sire, by r leve, that am not I, for ye have ful often assaied gret silence and my gret patience, and eke how that I can hide and hele thinges that men oughten etly to hiden. And sothly as to your fifthe reson, crasye say that in wicked conseil women venquish- nen, God wote that thilke reson stant here in no le; for understandeth now ye axen conseil for to wickednesse, and if ye wol werken wickednesse, your wif restraineth thilke wicked purpos, and rcometh you by reson and by good conseil, certes r wif ought rather to be praised than to be blamed: shulde ye understonde the philosophre that sayth, icked conseil women venquishen hir husbondes. I ther as ye blamen all women and hir resons, I shewe you by many ensamples that many wo- have ben ful good, and yet ben, and hir conseil some and profitable. Eke som men han sayd that conseil of women is either to dere or elles to litel ris: but al be it so that ful many a woman be bad, hire conseil vile and nought worth, yet han men

founden ful many a good woman, and discrete and wise in counselling. Lo Jacob, thurgh the good conseil of his mother Rebecke, wan the benison of his father and the lordship over all his brethren; Judith by hire good conseil delivered the citee of Bethulie, in which she dwelt, out of the honde of Holoferne, that had it besteged, and wolde it al destroye; Abigail delivered Nabal hire housbond fro David the king, that wolde han slain him, and appeased the ire of the king by hire wit and by hire good counselling; Hester by hire conseil enhaunced gretly the peple of God in the regne of Assuerus the king; and the same bountee in good counselling of many a good woman moun men rede and tell. And further more, whan that oure Lord had created Adam oure forme father he sayd in this wise; It is not good to be a man allone; make we to him an helpe semblable to himself. Here moun ye see that if that women weren not good, and hir conseil good and profitable, oure Lord God of heven wolde neither han wrought hem ne called hem helpe of man, but rather confusoun of man. And ther sayd a clerk ones in two vers, What is better than gold? jaspre; what is better than jaspre? wisdom; and what is better than wisdom? woman; and what is better than a good woman? nothing. And, Sire, by many other resons moun ye seen that many women ben good, and hir conseil good and profitable: and therefore, Sire, if ye wol trolle to my conseil I shal restore you your doughter.

hole and sound, and I wol don to you so muche that ye shuln have honour in this cas.

When Melibee had herd the wordes of his wif Prudence he sayd thus; I se wel that the word of Salomon is soth, for he saith that wordes that ben spoken discretly by ordinaunce ben honiecombes, for they yeven swetenesse to the soule and holsomnesse to the body: and, wif, because of thy swete wordes, and eke for I have preved and assaied thy gréte sapience and thy gréte trouthe, I wol governe me by thy conseil in alle thing.

Now, Sire, (quod Dame Prudence) and sin that ye vouchesafe to be governed by my conseil I wol enforme you how that ye shuln governe yourself in chesing of youre conseillours. Ye shuln first in alle your werkes mekely beseechen to the heigh God that he wol be your conseillour, and shapeth you to swiche entente that he yeve you conseil and comforte, as taught Tobie his sone; At alle times thou shalt blesse God, and preie him to dresse thy wayes; and loke that alle thy counseils ben in him for evermore. Seint James eke sayth, If any of you have nede of sapience axe it of God. And afterwarde than shullen ye take conseil in yourself, and examine wel your owen thoughtes of swiche thinges as you thinketh that ben best for your profit; and than shuln ye drive fro your herte three thinges that ben contrarious to good conseil, that is to sayn, ire, covetise, and hastinesse.

First, he that axeth conseil of himself certes he may be withouten ire for many causes. The first is this; he that hath gret ire and wrath in himself he weneth alway that he may do thing that he may not do. And; secondly, he that is irous and wroth he may not wel deme; and he that may not wel deme may not wel conseille. The thridde is this; he that is irous and wroth, as sayth Senek, ne may not speke but blameful thinges, and with his vicious wordes he stirreth other folk to anger and to ire. And eke, Sire, ye must drive coveitise out of your herte, for the apostle sayth that coveitise is the rote of alle harmes; and trosteth wel that a coveitous man ne can not deme ne thiuke but only to fulfille the end of his coveitise and certes that ne may never ben accomplished, for ever the more haboundance that he hath of richesse the more he desireth. And, Sire, ye must also drive out of youre herte hastinesse; for certes ye ne moun not deme for the beste a soden thought that falleth in your herte, but ye must avise you on it ful ofte, for, as ye have herde herebefore, the commune proverbe is this, He that sone demeth sone repenteth.

Sire, ye ne be not alway in like disposition, for certes som thing that somtime semeth to you that it is good for to do another time it semeth to you the contrarie.

And whan ye han taken conseil in yourself, and han demed by good deliberation swiche thing as you se-

much beste, than rede I you that ye kepe it secree. Bewreye not your conseil to no persone, but if so be that ye wenen likerly that thurgh youre bewreying youre condition shal ben to you more profitable; for Iesus Sirak saith, Neither to thy soone to thy frend discover not thy secree ne thy folie, for they woln yeve you audience and loking, and supportation, in your presence, and scorne you in youre absence. Another clerk sayth, that scarcely shalt thou finden any persone that may kepe thy conseil secrely. The book sayth, While that thou kepest thy conseil in thin herte thou kepest it in thy prison, and whan thou bewreyest thy conseil to any wight he holdeth thee in his snare: and therefore you is better to hide your conseil in your herte than to preye him to whom ye han bewreyed youre conseil that he wol kepe it close and stille; for Seneca sayth, If so be that thou ne mayst not thin owen conseil hide how dardest thou preyen any other wight thy conseil secrely to kepe? But natheles, if thou wene likerly that thy bewreying of thy conseil to a persone wol make thy condition to stonden in the better plight, than shalt thou telle him thy conseil in this wise. First, thou shalt make no semblant whether thee were lever pees or werre, or this or that, ne shewe him not thy will ne thin entente; for trosse wel that comunly these conseillours ben flaterers, namely the conseillours of grete lordes, for they enforcen hem alway rather to speken plesant wordes, enclining to the lordes

last; than wordis that ben trewe and good; therefore men sayn that the riche men bestifill conseil but if he have troff himself. And also the feble consider thy frendes and thin counsaill; touching thy frendes; thou shalt consider which ben most faithfull and most wise; and also whiche appreyved in counselling; and if thou thinkest thy conseil as the one requireth; may on too he

I say; that if ye shal clepe to youre conseil frendes; thus ben trewe; for Salomon sayth that as the harte of a man deliteth in favour that is right so the conseil of trewe frendes yeth stee to the soules; he sayth also, Ther may nothing ned to the trewe frend; for certes gold ne silver so muche worth as the good will of a trewe; and eke he sayth; that a trewe frend is a strength; who so that it findeth, certes he findeth tresor. Than shal ye eke consider if that you frendes ben discrete and wise; for the book sai alway thy conseil of hem that ben wise. And same reson shal ye clepen to youre conseil youdes that ben of age; swiche as han seyn and pert in many thinges; and ben appreyved in thinges; for the book sayth, In olde men is al thence; and in longe time the prudence; and sayth that grete thinges ne ben not ay accorde by strengthe ne by delivernesse of body; but by conseil; by auctoritee of persones; and by scienc which three thinges ne ben not feble by age; I

tes they enforcen and encreasen day by day: And than shaln ye kepe this for a general reule; first, ye shuln clepe to your conseil a fewe of your frendes that ben especial; for Salomon saith, Many frendes have thou, but among a thousand chese thee on to be thy conseilour. For al be it so that thou first ne telle thy conseil but to a fewe, thou mayest afterwarde tell it to mo folk if it be nede. But loke alway that thy conseilours have thilke three conditions that I have sayd before; that is to say, that they be trewe, wise, and of olde experience. And werke not alway in every nede by on conseilour allone, for sometime behueth it to be conseyllid by many; for Salomon sayth, Salvation of thinges is wher as ther ben many conseilours.

Now sith that I have told you of which folk ye shulde be conseyllid, now wol I teche you which conseil ye ought to eschue. First, ye shuln eschue the conseil of fooles; for Salomon sayth, Take no conseil of a fool, for he ne cannot conseyll but after his owen lust and his affection: the book sayth, The propertee of a fool is this, he troweth lightly harme of every man, and lightly troweth all bountee in himself. Thou shalt eke eschue the conseil of all flaterers, swiche as enforcen hem rather to preisen youre persone by flaterie than for to tell you the sothfastnesse of thinges.

Wherfore Tullius sayth, Among alle the pestilences that ben in frendship the gretest is flaterie; and therefore it is more reule that thou eschue and drede flate-

rers than any other peple. The book saith, Thou shalt
 rather drede and flee fro the swete wordes of flatering
 preisers than fro the egre wordes of thy frend that
 saith thee sothes: Salomon saith, that the wordes of a
 flaterer is a snare to cacchen innocentes: he sayth al-
 so, He that lpeketh to his frend wordes of swetenesse
 and of plesaunce he setteth a net beforde his feet to
 cacchen him: and therefore sayth Tullius, Encline not
 thin eres to flaterers, ne take no conseil of wordes of
 flaterie: and Caton sayth, * A wise thou wel, and eschue
 wordes of swetenesse and of plesaunce. And eke thou
 shalt eschue the conseilling of thin olde enemies that
 ben reconciled. The book sayth, that no wight re-
 tourneth safely into the grace of his oldeemie: and
 Ysop sayth, Ne trost not to hem to which thou hast
 fomite had werre or enmitee, ne telle hem not thy
 conseil: and Senek telleth the cause why; It may not
 be, sayth he, ther as gret fire hath long time endured
 that ther ne dwelleth som vapour of warmnesse; and
 therefore saith Salomon, In thin olde foe trost thou ne-
 ver; for likerly though thinemie be reconciled, and
 maketh thee chere of humilitee, and louteth to thee
 with his hed, ne trost him never, for certes he maketh
 thilke feined humilitee more for his profite than for any
 love of thy persone, because that he demeth to have vic-
 torie over thy persone by swiche feined contenance,
 the which victorie he might not have by strif of werre.

* *Arist thou wel*] He refers, I presume, to *Cato*, l. 111. dist. 6.;
 sermone blandos inimicis cavere memento.

And Peter Alphonse sayth; Make no felawship with thin olde enemies, for if thou do hem bountee they wollen perverten it to wickednesse. And ekethou must eschue the conseilling of hem that ben thy servaunts, and beren thee gret reverence, for paraventure they sein it more for drede than for love; and therefore saith a philosophre in this wise, Ther is no wight partly trewe to him that he to fore dredeth. And Tullius sayth, Ther n'is no might so gret of any emperour that longe may endure but if he have more love of the peple than drede. Thou shalt also eschue the conseilling of folk that ben dronkelewe, for they ne can no conseil hide; for Salomon sayth, Ther n'is no privetee ther as regneth dronkennesse. Ye shuln also have in suspect the conseilling of swiche folk as conseilte you o thing prively and conseilte you the contrarie openly; for Cassiodore sayth that it is a manere sleighte to hinder his enemy whan he sheweth to don a thing openly and werketh prively the contrary. Thou shalt also have in suspect the conseilling of wicked folk, for hir conseil is alway ful of fraude. And David sayth, Blisful is that man that hath not folwed the conseilling of shrewes. Thou shalt also eschue the conseilling of yonge folk, for hir conseilling is not ripe, as Salomon saith.

Now, Sire, sith I have shewed you of which folk ye shullen take youre conseil, and of which folk ye shullen eschue the conseil, now wol I teche you how ye shuln examine your conseil after the doctrine of

Tullius. In examynynge than of your counsellours ye shuln confidre many thynges. Alderfirst, thou shalt confidre that in this thing that thou purpofest, and upon what thing that thou wolt have conseil, that very trouthe be said and conserved; this is to say, telle trewely thy tale; for he that sayth false may not wel be consailed in that cas of which he lieth. And after this thou shalt confidre the thynges that accorden to that thou purpofest for to do by thy counsellours, if reson accord therto; and eke if thy might may atteine therto, and if the more part and the better part of this counsellours accorden therto or no. Than shalt thou confidre what thing shal solwe of that counselling, as hate, pees, werre; grace, profite; or damage, and many other thynges, and in alle thynges thou shalt chese the beste, and weive alle other thynges. Than shalt thou confidre of what roote is engendred the matere of thy conseil, and what fruit it may conceive and engendre. Thou shalt eke confidre alle the causes from whennes they ben sprongen. And whan thou hast examyned thy conseil, as I have said, and which partie is the better and more profitable, and hast appproved it by many wise folk and olde, than shalt thou confidre if thou mayst performe it and maken of it a good ende; for certes reson wol not that any man shulde beginne a thing but if he mighte performe it as him oughte, ne no wight shulde take upon him so hevy a charge that he might not beren it; for the proverbe

sayth, He that to muche embraceth distreineth litel; and Caton saith, * *Affay to do swiche thinges as thou hast power to don, lest the charge oppresse thee so fore that thee behoveth to weive thing that thou hast begonne.* And if so be that thou be in doute whether thou mayst performe a thing or non, chese rather to suffre than to beginne. And Peter Alphonse sayth, If thou hast might to don a thing of which thou must repente it is better nay than ya; this is to sayn, that thee is better to holde thy tonge stille than for to speke. Than mayst thou understonde by stronger resons that if thou hast power to performe a werk of which thou shalt repente, than is thee better that thou suffre than beginne. Wel sain they that defenden every wight to assaye a thing of which he is in doute whether he may performe it or non. And after whan ye han examined youre conseil as I have said beforen, and knowen wel that ye moun performe your emprise, conferme it than sadly til it be at an ende. Now is it reson and time that I shewe you whan and wherfore that ye moun change your conseil withouten reprove. Sothly a man may change his purpos and his conseil if the cause ceseth, or whan a newe cas betideth; for the lawe saith, that upon thinges that newly betiden behoveth newe conseil; and Seneca sayth, If thy conseil is comen to the

* *Affay to do swiche thinges*] This precept of *Cato* is in l. iii. dist. 16.;

Quod potes id tentato; operis ne pondere pressus
succumbat labor, et frustra tentata relinques.

Volume IV.

O

eres of thin enemies chaunge thy conseil. Thou mayst also chaunge thy conseil if so be that thou find that by errour or by other cause harme or damage may betide: also if thy conseil be dishoneste, other elles come of dishoneste cause, chaunge thy conseil; for the lawes sain that all behestes that ben dishoneste ben of no value; and eke if so be that it be impossible, or may not goodly be performed or kept.

And take this for a general reule, that every conseil that is affirmed so strongly that it may not be chaunged for no condition that may betide, I say that thilke conseil is wicked.

This Melibeus, whan he had herd the doctrine of his wif Dame Prudence, answered in this wise: Dame, quod he, as yet unto this time ye han wel and covenably taught me, as in general, how I shal governe me in the chesing and in the withholding of my conseilours; but now wold I fain that ye wold condescend in especial, and telle me how liketh you or what semeth you by oure conseilours that we han chosen in oure present nede.

My Lord, quod she, I beseeche you in alle humbleste that ye wol not wilfully replie agein my resons, ne displeure your herte, though I speke thing that you displese, for God wote that as in min entente I speke it for your beste, for youre honour and for youre profit eke, and sothly I hope that youre benignitee wol taken it in patience. And troweth me wel, quod she,

that youre conseil as in this cas ne shulde not (as to speke proprely) be called a conseilling, but a motion or a meving of folie, in which conseil ye han erred in many a sondry wise.

First and forward, ye han erred in the assembling of youre conseilours, for ye sholde first han cleped a fewe folk to youre conseil, and after ye mighte han shewed it to mo folk if it hadde be nede; but certes ye han sodeinly cleped to your conseil a gret multitude of peple ful chargeant and ful anoyous for to here. Also ye han erred, for ther as ye shulde han only cleped to youre conseile youre trewe frendes olde and wise, ye han cleped straunge folk, yonge folk, false flatterers, and enemies reconciled, and folk that don you reverence withouten love. And eke ye han erred, for ye han brought with you to youre conseil ire, covetise, and hastifnesse, the which three thinges ben contrary to every conseil honest and profitable, the which three thinges ye ne han not anientified or destroyed neither in youreself ne in youre conseilours as you ought. Ye han erred also, for ye han shewed to youre conseilours youre talent and youre affections to make werre anon, and for to do vengeance, and they han espied by youre wordes to what thing ye ben enclined, and therfore han they conseilled you rather to youre talent than to youre profite. Ye han erred also, for it semeth that you sufficeth to han ben conseilled by thise conseilours only; and with litel avis, wheras in so high and so gret

a nede it had ben necessarie mo conseilours deliberation to performe youre emprise. Y also, for ye han not examined your conseil said manere, ne in due manere as the ca. Ye han erred also, for ye han maked no twix youre conseilours; this is to sayn, be trewe frendes and youre feined conseilours han not knowe the wille of your trewe frend and wise, but ye han cast alle hir wordes in a pot, and entlined your herte to the more the greter nombre, and ther be ye condescendith ye wot wel that men shuln alway finde more nombre of fooles than of wise men, and in such conseilings that ben at congregations and of folk, ther as men take more regard to the nombre than to the sapience of persones, ye see in swiche conseilings fooles han the maiestrie. Melibee answered and said agein; I graunte we have erred, but ther as thou hast told me heretofore he n'is not to blame that chaungeth his counsel in a certain cas, and for certain and just causes, I am content to chaunge my conseil right as thou wolt. The proverbe sayth, For to don sinne is mannis nature, for to persevere long in sinne is werke of the devyl. To this sentence answered anon Dame Prudence and saide; Examineth (quod she) wel ye conseilours, and let us see the which of hem han spoken resonably, and taught you best conseil; and (

as the examination is necessarie, let us beginne at the furgiens and at the physiciens that first spoken in this mater. I say that physiciens and furgiens han sayde you in youre conseil discretly as hem oughte, and in hir speche saiden ful wisely that to the office of hem apperteineth to don to every wight honour and profite, and no wight to anoye, and after hir craft to don gret diligence unto the cure of hem which that they han in hir governaunce. And, Sire, right as they han answered wisely and discretly, right so rede I that they be highly and soverainly guerdoned for hir noble speche, and eke for they shulden do the more ententif besineffe in the curation of thy dere doughter: for al be it so that they ben youre frendes, therfore shullen ye not suffren that they serve you for nought, but ye oughte the rather guerdone hem, and shewe hem youre largeffe. And as touching the proposition which the physiciens entreteden in this cas, this is to fain, that in maladies that a contrarie is warisbed by another contrarie, I wold fain knowe how ye understonde thilke text, and what is youre sentence. Certes, quod Melibeus, I understond it in this wise, that right as they han don me a contrarie, right so shulde I don hem another; for right as they han venged hem upon me and don me wrong, right so shal I venge me upon hem and don hem wrong, and than have I cured a contrarie by another.

Lo, lo! quod Dame Prudence, how lightly is every

man enclined to his owen desire and his owen pleasure ! Certes (quod she) the wordes of the physicians ne shulden not han ben understonden in that wise, for certes wickednesse is not contrarie to wickednesse, ne vengeance to vengeance, ne wrong to wrong, but they ben semblable, and therfore a vengeance is not warished by another vengeance, ne a wrong by another wrong, but everich of hem encreseth and aggregeth other, But certes the wordes of the physicians shulden ben understonde in this wise, for good and wickednesse ben two contraries, and pees and werre, vengeance and suffraunce, discord and accord, and many other thinges ; but certes wickednesse shal be warished by goodnesse, discord by accord, werre by pees, and so forth of other thinges. And hereto accordeth Seint Poule the apostle in many places ; he sayth, Ne yelde not harme for harme, ne wicked speche for wicked speche, but do wel to him that doth to thee harme, and bleffe him that saith to thee harme : and in many other places he amonesteth pees and accord. But now wol I speke to you of the conseil which that was yeven to you by the men of lawe, and the wise folk and old folke, that sayden alle by on accord as ye han herd before, that ever alle thinges ye shuln do youre diligence to kepe youre persone, and to warne-store your house ; and saiden also, that in this cas you oughte for to werchen ful avisely and with gret deliberation. And, Sire, as to the first point, that touch-

eth the keping of youre persone, ye shuln understond that he that hath werre shal ever more devoutly and mekely preien beforne alle thinges that Jesu Crist of his mercie wol han him in his protection, and ben his foveraine helping at his nede; for certes in this world ther is no wight that may be conseilled ne kept sufficiently withoute the keping of oure Lord Jesu Crist. To this sentence accordeth the prophete David, that sayth, If God ne kepe the citee in idel waketh he that kepeth it. Now, Sire, than shuln ye committe the keping of youre persone to youre trewe frendes that ben apprevd and yknowe, and of hem shuln ye axen helpe youre persone for to kepe; for Caton saith, * If thou have nede of helpe axe it of thy frendes, for ther n'is non so good a physicien as thy trewe frend. And after this than shuln ye kepe you fro alle straunge folk, and fro lieres, and have alway in suspect hir compaignie; for Piers Alphonse sayth, Ne take no compaignie by the way of a straunge man, but if so be that thou have knowen him of lenger time; and if so be that he falle into thy compaignie paraventure withouten thin assent, enquere than as subtilly as thou maist of his conversation, and of his lif beforne, and seine thy way, saying thou wolt go thider as thou wolt not go; and if he bere a spere hold thee on the right side, and if he bere a swerd hold thee on his left side. And

* *If thou have nede*] *Cato*, l. lv. dist. 14.;

Auxilium a notis petito, si forte laboras;

Nec quisquam melior medicus quam fidus amicus.

after this than shuln ye kepe you wisely from all swiche manere peple as I have sayed before, and hem and hir conseil eschue. And after this than shuln ye kepe you in swiche manere that for any presumption of youre strengthe that ye ne despise not ne account not the might of youre adversary so lite that ye let the keping of youre persone for your presumption, for every wise man dredeth his enemy: and Salomon sayth, Welful is he that of alle hath drede; for certes he that thurgh the hardinesse of his herte, and thurgh the hardinesse of himself, hath to gret presumption him shal evil be-tide. Than shuln ye evermo countrewaite emboyssments and alle espiaile; for Senek sayth that the wise man that dredeth harmes eschueth harmes, ne he ne falleth into perils that perils eschueth. And al be it so that it seme that thou art in siker place, yet shalt thou alway do thy diligence in keping of thy persone; this is to sayn, ne be not negligent to kepe thin persone not only fro thy grettest enemy but also fro thy lesse enemy. Senek sayth, A man that is wel avised he dredeth his lesse enemy; Ovide sayth that the litel wescel wol flee the gret boll and the wilde hart; and the book sayth, A litel thorne may prikke a king ful fore, and a litel hound wol hold the wilde bore. But natheles I say not thou shalt be so coward that thou doute wher as is no drede. The book saith that * som men [han

* *som men*, &c.] This passage, which is defective in all the mss. I have patched up as well as I could, by adding the words between hooks from the French *Melibée*, where it stands thus;

taught hir deceivour, for they han to muche dreded] to be deceived. Yet shalt thou drede to be empoysoned and [therfore shalt thou] kepe thee fro the compaignie of scornors; for the book sayth, With scornors ne make no compaignie, but flee hir wordes as venime.

Now as to the second point, wheras youre wise conseilours conseilled you to warnestore your hous with gret diligence, I wolde fain knowe how that ye understode thilke wordes, and what is youre sentence.

Melibeus answered and saide; Certes I understond it in this wise, that I shal warnestore min hous with toures, swiche as han castelles and other manere edifices, and armure, and artelries, by which thinges I may my persone and myn hous so kepen and defenden that min enemies shuln ben in drede min hous for to approche.

To this sentence answered anon Prudence: Warne-
storing (quod she) of heighe toures and of grete edifices is with grete collages and with grete travaille, and whan that they ben accompliced yet ben they not worth a stre but if they ben defended by trewe fren-
des that ben olde and wise. And understonde wel that the greteste and strongeste garneson that a riche

“Aucunes gens ont enseigne leur decevour, car ils ont trop
 “doubte que on ne les deceut. Apres tu te dois garder de ve-
 “nim, et si te dois garder de compaignie de moqueurs, car il
 “est escript, Avec les moqueurs n’aies compaignie, et fuy leurs
 “paroles comme le venim.”

that may haue, as wel, to kepe his posses-
 goods, is, that he be beloued with his fel-
 lowes, with his neighebores; for thus sayth Tullius
 that there is a manner garneson that no man may
 be discomfite, and that is a lord to be beloued
 of his ciuities and of his peple:

Now, as to the thridde point, what
 olde and wise counsellours sayden that you
 not hastily ne hastily proceden in this mat-
 ter, you oughte parveyen and appareille you
 with gret diligence and gret deliberation, I
 trowe that they sayden right wisely and right
 for Tullius sayth, In every nedde er thou be
 appareille thee with gret diligence. Than say
 we geaunce taking in werre, in bataille, and
 nestoring, er thou beginne I rede that thou
 thinke thereto, and do it with gret deliberation;
 thus sayth that longe appareilling tofore the
 maketh short victorie; and Cassiodorus saith
 that a garneson is stronger whan it is longe time.

But now let us speken of the conseil that
 is accorded by youre neighebores swiche as doe
 verence withouten love, youre olde enemies
 ciled, your flaterers, that counseilled you
 thinges prively, and openly counseilled you
 contrarye, the yonge folk also, that counseilled
 you to venge you and to make werre anon. Certes
 I have sayde beforne, ye han gretly erred to

ped swiche maner folk to youre conseil, which conseil-
lours ben ynough reproved by the reson aforesaid :
but natheles, let us now descende to the special. Ye
shul first proceden after the doctrine of Tullius. Cer-
tes the trouthe of this matere or of this conseil nedeth
not diligently to enquire, for it is wel wist which they
ben that han don to you this trespass and vilanie, and
how many trespassours, and in what manere, they han
don to you all this wrong and all this vilanie. And after
this than shuln ye examine the second condition which
that the same Tullius addeth in this matere; for Ful-
lius putteth a thing which that he clepeth Consent-
ing; this to sayn, who ben they, and which ben they,
and how many, that consenten to thy conseil in thy
wilfulnesse to don hastif vengeance. And let us con-
sidre also who ben they, and how many ben they, and
which ben they, that consenteden to youre adversar-
ries. As to the first point, it is wel knowen which folk
they be that consenteden to youre wilfulnesse, for
trewely all tho that conseileden you to maken sodein
werre ne ben not youre frendes. Let us now considre
which ben they that ye holden so gretly youre frendes
as to youre persone, for al be it so that ye be mighty
and riche, certes ye ne ben but allone; for certes yene
han no child but a doughter, ne ye ne han no brith-
ren, ne cosins germains, ne non other nigh kintede,
wherfore that your enemies for drede shulde flinte to
plede with you or to destroye youre persone. Ye

known also that your richesles moten ben dispended in diuerle parties, and whan that every wight hath his part they ne wollen taken but litel regard to vengeance deth. But thin enemies ben three, and they ha many brethren, children, cofins, and other nigh kinrede; and though so were that thou haddeft slain of hem two or three, yet dwellen ther ynow to wreken hir deth, and to see thy persone. And though so be that youre kinrede be more stedfast and fiker than the kin of your aduersaries, yet natheles youre kinrede is but a fer kinrede; they ben but litel sibbe to you, and the kin of youre enemies ben nigh sibbe to hem; and certes as in that hir condition is better than youre. Than let us confidre also of the conseilling of hem that conseilled you to take sodein vengeance, whether it acorde to reson; and certes ye knowe wel nay; for as by right and reson ther may no man taken vengeance on no wight but the juge that hath the jurisdiction of it, whan it is ygraunted him to take thilke vengeance hastily or attemprely as the lawe requieth. And yet moreover of thilke word that Tullius clepeth Consenting, thou shalt confidre if thy might and thy power may consente and suffice to thy wilfulnesse and to thy conseilours; and certes thou mayest wel say that Nay; for fikerly, as for to speke properly, we moun do nothing but only swiche thing as we moun don rightfully; and certes rightfully ye ne mowe take no vengeance, as of your propre auc-

corite. Than mowe ye sen that your power ne consenteth not ne accordeth not to youre wilfulnesse. Now let us examine the thridde point, that Tullius clepeth Consequent. Thou shalt understonde that the vengeaunce that thou purposest for to take is the consequent, and therof folweth another vengeance, per-
ril, and werre, and other damages withouten nombre, of which we ben not ware as at this time. And as touching the fourthe point, that Tullius clepeth Engendring, thou shalt consider that this wrong which that is don to thee is engendred of the hate of thin enemies, and of the vengeaunce taking upon that wold engender another vengeaunce, and muchel sorwe and wasting of riches, as I sayde ere.

Now, Sire, as to the point that Tullius clepeth Causes, which that is the last point, thou shalt understonde that the wrong that thou hast received hath certaine causes which that clerkes clepen *oriens* and *eficiens*, and *causa longinqua* and *causa propinqua*; this is to sayn, the fer cause and the nigh cause. The fer cause is almighty God, that is cause of alle thinges; the ner cause is thin three enemies; the cause accidental was hate; the cause material ben the five woundes of thy doughter; the cause formal is the maner of hir werking, that broughten ladders and clomben in at thy windowes; the cause final was for to flee thy doughter: it letted not in as muche as in hem was. But for to speke of the fer cause, as to what ende they shuln come, or what shal

finally betide of hem in this cas, ne can I
but by conjecting and supposing; for we
pose that they shal come to a wicked ende
that the book of Decrees sayth, Selden or
peine ben causes ybrought to a good ende
ben badly begonne.

Now, Sire, if men wold axen me why tha
fred men to do you this vilanie, certes I can
swer as for no sothfastnesse; for the apostle
the sciences and the jugements of oure Lord
mighty ben ful depe; ther may no man co
ne serche hem suffisantly; natheles, by c
sumptions and conjectings I hold and beleve
which that is ful of justice and of rightwisen
suffered this betide by just cause resonable.

Thy name is Melibee, this is to sayn, a
drinketh hony. Thou hast dronke so much
swete temporel riches, and delices, and h
this world, that thou art drunken, and hast
Jesu Crist thy creatour: thou ne hast not d
swiche honour and reverence as thee ought
ne hast wel ytaken kepe to the wordes of O
sayth. Under the honey of the goodes of th
hid the venime that sleth the soule: and
sayth, If thou hast founden hony etc of it
ceth, for if thou etc of it out of mesure thou sh
and be nedy and poure. And peraventure
thee in despit, and hath tourned away fro the

and his eres of misericorde, and also he hath suffred that thou hast ben punished in the manere that thou hast ytrespased. Thou hast don sinne again oure Lord Crist, for certes the three enemies of mankind, that is to sayn, the flesh, the fend, and the world, thou hast suffred hem entre into thin herte wilfully by the windowes of thy body, and hast not defended thyself sufficiently agein hir assautes and hir temptations, so that they han wounded thy soule in fve places; this is to sayn, the dedly sinnes that ben entred into thyn herte by thy five wittes: and in the same manere our Lord Crist hath wold and suffred that thy three enemies ben entred into thyn hous by the windowes, and han ywounded thy doughter in the foresayd manere.

Certes, quod Melibee, I see wel that ye enforce you muchel by wordesto overcomen me in swiche manere that I shal not venge me on mine enemies, shewing me the perils and the evils that mighten falle of this vengeaunce; but who so wolde confidre in alle vengeaunces the perils and evils that mighten sue of vengeaunce taking a man wold never take vengeaunce, and that were harme; for by the vengeaunce taking ben the wicked men dissevered fro the goode men, and they that han will to do wickednesse restrainen hir wicked purpos whan they sen the punishing and the chaastising * of the trespassours. [To this answered

* *of the treppysours*] The following passage, which the reader will see to be very material to the sense, I have translated from

Dame Prudence : Certes, quod she, I ghesse to you shew of vengeance taking cometh muche evil and muche good; but vengeance taking appertaineth not to everich on, but only to juges, and to hem that han the jurisdiction over the trespassours.] And yet say I more, that right as a singular persone sinneth in taking vengeance of another man, right so sinneth the jage if he do no vengeance of hem that it han deserved; for Senek sayth thus, That maister (he sayth) is good that preveth shrewes; and Cassiodore sayth, A man dredeth to do outrages whan he wot and knoweth that it displeseth to the juges and souveraines; and another sayth, The jage that dredeth to do right maketh men shrewes; and Seint Poule the apostle sayth in his epistle, whan he writeth unto the Romaines, that the juges beren not the spere withouten cause, but they beren it to punishe the shrewes and misdoers, and for to defende the goode men. If ye wiln than take vengeance of youre enemies ye shuln retourne or have your recours to the jage that hath the jurisdiction upon hem, and he shal punishe hem as the lawe axeth and requireth.

A! sayd Melibee, this vengeance liketh me nothing. I bethink me now and take hede how that Fortune hath norished me fro my childhode, and hath holpe the French, and inserted between honks, as before; “ Et a ce
 “ respont Dame Prudence : Certes, dist elle, le t’otroye que de
 “ vengeance vient molt de maulx et de biens, mais vengeance
 “ n’appartient pas a un chascun, fors seulement aux juges et
 “ a ceulx qui ont la juridicion sur les malfaitours”—

me to passe many a stronge pas: now wol I assaye
e, trowing with Goddes helpe that she shal helpe
my shame for to venge.

ertes, quod Prudence, if ye wol werke by my conseil
shuln not assaye Fortune by no way, ne ye ne shuln
lene or bowe unto hire, after the wordes of Senek;
things that ben folily don, and tho that ben don
rope of Fortune, shuln never come to good ende.

As the same Senek sayth, The more clere and the
re shining that Fortune is the more brotel and the
er broke she is. Trusteth not in hire, for she n'is
: stedfast ne stable, for whan thou trowest to be
st siker and seure of hire helpe she wol faille and
ceive thee. And wheras ye fayn that Fortune hath
rished you fro youre childhode, I say that in so mu-
l ye shuln the lesse truste in hire and in hire wit;

Senek faith, What man that is norished by For-
e she maketh him a gret fool. Now than sin ye
ire and axe vengeance, and the vengeance that
on after the lawe and before the juge ne liketh you
; and the vengeance that is don in hope of For-
e is perilous and uncertain, than have ye non other
nedie but for to have your recours unto the sove-
ne juge that vengeth alle vilanies and wronges, and
shal venge you; after that himself witnesseth wher-
e faith, Leveth the vengeance to me, and I shal
it.

Melibeus answered, If I ne venge me of the vilanie

that men hand on to me I sompne or warne hem that han don to me vilanie, and alle other, to do me another vilanie ; for it is written, If thou take no vengeance of an olde vilany thou sompnest thin adversaries to do thee a newe vilanie : and also for my suffraunce men wolden do me so muche vilanie that I might neither bere it ne susteine, and so shulde I ben put and holden over lowe ; for som men sain, In muchel suffring shul many thinges falle unto thee which thou shalt not mowe suffre.

Certes, quod Prudence, I graunte you wel that overmuchel suffraunce is not good, but yet ne folweth it not therof that every persone to whom men don vilanie shuld take of it vengeance, for that apperteineth and longeth all only to the juges, for they shul venge the vilanies and injuries ; and therefore tho two auctoritees that ye han sayd above ben only understonden in the juges, for whan they suffren overmuchel the wronges and vilanies to be don withouten punishing they sompne not a man all only for to do newe wronges but they commaunden it, al so as a wise man sayth that the jure that correcteth not the sinner commaundeth and biddeth him do sinne : and the juges and soveraines mighten in hir lond so muche suffre of the shrewes and misdoers, that they shulden by swiche suffraunce by proces of time wexen of swiche power and might that they shuld putte out the juges and the soveraines from hir places, and atte laste maken hem lese hir lordshippes.

But now let us putte that ye have leue to venge you : I say ye be not of might and power as now to venge you ; for if ye wol maken comparison unto the might of youre adversaries, ye shuln finde in many thinges that I have shewed you er this that hir condition is better than youre, and therfore say I that it is good as now that ye suffre and be patient.

Forthermore, ye knowen wel that after the comune saw it is a woodnesse a man to strive with a stronger or a more mighty man than he is himself; and for to strive with a man of even strengthe, that is to say, with as strong a man as he is, it is peril; and for to strive with a weker man it is folie; and therfore shulde a man flee striving as muchel as he mighte; for Salomon sayth, It is a gret worship to a man to kepe him fro noise and strif. And if it so happe that a man of greter mighte and strengthe than thou art do thee grevaunce, studie and besie thee rather to stille the same grevaunce than for to venge thee; for Senek sayth, that he putteth him in a grete peril that striveth with a greter man than he is himself; and Caton sayth, * If a man of higher estat or degree, or more mighty than thou, do thee anoye or grevance suffre him, for he that ones hath greved thee may another time releve thee and helpe thee. Yet sette I

* *If a man of higher estat*] This prudent advice is from *Cato*, l. iv. dist. 40. ;

Cede locum læsus, fortunæ cede potentj [*f. potentis*]
Lædere qui potuit, procedere aliquando valebit.

cas ye have bothe might and licence for to venge you; I say that ther ben ful many thinges that shal restraine you of vengance taking, and make you for to encline to suffre and for to han patience in the wronges that han ben don to you. First and forward, if ye wol confidre the defautes that ben in youre owen persone, for which defautes God hath suffred you have this tribulation, as I have sayd to you herebefore; for the poete sayth, that we oughten patiently taken the tribulations that comen to us, whan that we thinken and consideren that we han deserved to have hem; and Seint Gregorie sayth, that whan a man considereth wel the nombre of his defautes and of his sinnes the peines and the tribulations that he suffereth semen the lesse unto him; and in as muche as him thinketh his sinnes more hevy and grevous, in so muche semeth his peins the lighter and the esier unto him. Also ye owen to encline and bowe youre herte to take the patience of oure Lord Jesu Crist, as sayth Seint Peter in his Epistles. Jesu Crist (he sayth) hath suffred for us, and yeven ensample to every man to solwe and sue him, for he dide never sinne, ne never came ther a vilains word out of his mouth. Whan men cursed him he cursed hem nought, and whan men beten him he manaced hem nought. Also the gret patience which seintes that ben in Paradis han had in tribulations that they han suffred withouten hir desert or gilt oughte muchel stirre you to patience. Ferthermore, ye shulde enforce

you to have patience, considering that the tribulations of this world but litel while endure, and sone passed ben and gon, and the joye that a man seketh to han by patience in tribulations is perdurable; after that the apostle sayth in his epistle, The joye of God, he sayth, is perdurable, that is to sayn, everlasting. Also troweth and beleveth stedfastly that he n'is not wel ynorished ne wel ytaught that cannot have patience, or wol not receive patience; for Salomon sayth, that the doctrine and wit of a man is knowen by patience; and in another place he sayeth, that he that is patient governeth him by gret prudence: and the same Salomon sayth, The angrie and wrathful man maketh noises, and the patient man attempreth and stilleth hem: he saith also, It is more worth to be patient than to be right strong; and he that may have the lordshipe of his owen herte is more to preise than he that by his force or strengthe taketh gret citees: and therefore sayth Seint James in his epistle that patience is a gret vertue of perfection.

Certes, quod Melibee, I graunte you, Dame Prudence, that patience is a gret vertue of perfection, but every man may not have the perfection that ye seken, ne I am not of the nombre of the right parfit men, for min herte may never be in pees unto the time it be venged. And al be it so that it was gret peril to min enemies to do me a vilanie in taking vengeance upon me, yet token they non hede of the peril, but

buten loue, no more may it liuen withouten
goodes, and by richeffes may a man gete
frendes; and therfore sayth Pamphilus, If a
doughter (he sayth) be riche, she may chese
sand men which she wol take to hire husb
a thousand men on wol not forsaken hire
hire. And this Pamphilus saith also, If thou
happy, that is to sayn, if thou be right
shalt finde a gret nombre of felawes and fre
if thy fortune chaunge, that thou wexe po
wel frendshipe and felawshipe, for thou
allone withouten any compaignie but if it be
paignie of poure folk. And yet sayth thi
lus moreover, that they that ben bond and
linage shuln be made worthy and noble by
And right so as by richeffes ther comen ma
right so by povertie come ther many h
eviles for gret povertie constreinet a man

overthrowing or falling down ; and therefore sayth Piers Alfonse, On of the gretest adversitees of this world is whan a free man by kinde, or of birthe, is constrained by poverté to eten the almesse of his enemye. And the same sayth Innocent in on of his bookes : he sayth, that forweful and unhappy is the condition of a poure begger, for if he axe not his mete he dieth for hunger, and if he axe he dieth for shame ; and algates necessitee constraineth him to axe ; and therefore sayth Salomon, that better it is to die than for to have swiche poverté : and, as the same Salomon sayth, Better it is to die of bitter deth than for to liven in swiche wise. By thise resons that I have said unto you, and by many other resons that I coude saye, I graunte you that riches ben good to hem that wel geten hem, and to hem that wel usen tho riches ; and therefore wol I shewe you how ye shuln behave you in gadering of youre riches, and in what manere ye shuln usen hem.

First, ye shuln geten hem withouten gret desir, by good leiser, sokingly, and not over hastily, for a man that is to desiring to gete riches abandoneth him firste to theste and to alle other eviles ; and therefore sayth Salomon, He that hasteth him to besily to wexe riche he shal be non innocent : he sayth also, that the riches that hastily cometh to a man sone and lightly goeth and passeth from a man, but that riches that cometh litel and litel wexeth alway and multiplieth.

And, Sire, ye shuden gete richesles by youre wit and and by youre travaille, unto youre profite, and that withouten wrong or harme doing to any other persone; for the lawe sayth, Ther maketh no man himself riche if he do harme to another wight; this is to say, that Nature defendeth and forbedeth by right that no man make himself riche unto the harme of another persone. And Tullius sayth, that no forwe, ne no drede of deth, ne nothing that may falle unto a man, is so muchel ageins nature as a man to encrese his owen profite to harme of another man. And though the grete men and the mighty men geten richesles more lightly than thou, yet shalt thou not ben idel ne slowe to do thy profite, for thou shalt in alle wise flee idelnesse; for Salomen sayth, that idelnesse techeth a man to do many eviles: and the same Salomon sayth, that he that travailleth and besiet him to tillen his lond shal ete bred, but he that is idel, and casteth him to no besinesse ne occupation, shal falle into poverté, and die for hunger. And he that is idel and slow can never find covenable time for to do his profite; for ther is a versifour sayth, that the idel man excuseth him in winter because of the grete cold, and in sommer by encheson of the hete. For thise causes, sayth Caton, Waketh*, and enclineth you not over muchel to slepe,

* *Waketh*, &c.] I can find nothing nearer to this in *Cato* than the maxim, l. iii. dist. 7.; *Segnitiam fugito*.—For the quotations from the same author in the following page, l. 15 and 19, see l. iv. dist. 17, and l. iii. dist. 32.

for over muchel reste norisheth and causeth many wices; and therfore sayth Seint Jerome, Doeth som good dedes, that the devil which is oure enemye ne finde you not unoccupied, for the devil ne taketh not lightly unto his working swiche as he findeth occupied in goode werkes.

Than thus in geting richesces ye musten flee idelnesse; and afterward ye shuln use the richesces which ye han geteu by youre wit and by youre travaille in swiche manere that men holde you not to scarce ne to sparing, ne fool-large, that is to say, over large a spender; for right as men blamen an avaricious man because of his scarcitee and chincherie, in the same wise is he to blame that spendeth over largely; and therfore saith Caton, Use (sayth he) the richesces that thou hast ygeten in swiche manere that men have no matere ne cause to calle thee nether wretche ne chinche, for it is a gret shame to a man to have a poure herte and a riche purse: he sayth also, The goodes that thou hast ygeten use hem by mesure, that is to sayn, spende mesurably, for they that solily wasten and dispenden the goodes that they han whan they han no more propre of hir owen that they shapen hem to take the goodes of another man. I say than that ye shuln flee avarice, using youre richesces in swiche manere that men sayn not that your richesces ben yberied, but that ye have hem in youre might and in youre wel-ding; for a wise man repreveth the avaricious man, and

sayth thus in two vers, Wherto and why berieth man his goodes by his gret avarice, and knoweth what nedes must he die, for deth is the end of every man as in this present lif? and for what cause encheson joineth he him or knitteth he him so fast unto his goodes that alle his wittes mowen not deliveren him or departen him from his goodes, as knoweth wel, or oughte to knowe, that whan he ded he shal nothing bere with him out of this world and therfore sayth Seint Augustine, that the avaricious man is likened unto helle, that the more it swelth the more desir it hath to swalwe and devour. And as wel as ye wolde eschue to be called an avaricious man or chinche, as wel shulde ye kepe you as governe you in swiche a wise that men calle you a fool-large; therfore saith Tullius, The goodes of the house ne shulde not ben hid ne kept so close but that they might ben opened by pitee and debonairete that is to sayn, to yeve hem part that han gret nede; thy goodes shulden not ben so open to be every man's goodes. Afterward, in geting of youre riches, as in using of hem ye shuln alway have three things in youre herte. that is to say, oure Lord God, conscienc and good name. First, ye shuln have God in your herte, and for no riches ye shuln do no thing which may in any manere displese God that is your creator and maker: for, after the word of Salomon, It is better to have a litel good with love of God than to have

muchel good and lese the love of his Lord God : and the prophete sayth, that better it is to ben a good man and have litel good and tresor than to be holden a shrewe and have grete riches. And yet I say furthermore, that ye shulden alway do youre besynesse to gete your riches, so that ye gete hem with good conscience. And the apostle sayth, that there n'is thing in this world of which we shulden have so gret joye as whan oure conscience bereth us good witnesse ; and the wise man sayth, The substaunce of a man is ful good whan sinne is not in mannes conscience. Afterward, in geting of youre riches and in using of hem ye must have gret besynesse and gret diligence that youre good name be alway kept and conserved ; for Salomon sayth, that beter it is and more it availleth a man to have a good name than for to have grete riches ; and therefore he sayth in another place, Do grete diligence (saith Salomon) in keping of thy frendes and of thy good name, for it shal lenger abide with thee than any tresor, be it never so precious ; and certes he shulde not be called a Gentilman that after God and good conscience alle thinges lest ne doth his diligence and besynesse to kepen his good name ; and Casiodore sayth, that it is a signe of a gentil herte whan a man loveth and desireth to have a good name ; and therefore sayth Seint Augustine, that ther ben two thinges that arn right necessarie and nedeful, and that is good conscience and good los ; that is to sayn, good

conscience to thin owen persone inward, and good los for thy neighebour outward. And he that trosteth him so muchel in his good conscience that he despiseth and setteth at nought his good name or los; and recketh not though he kepe not his good name, n'is but a cruel cherl.

Sire, now have I shewed you how ye shulden do in geting riches, and how ye shuln asen hem; and I see wel that for the trust that ye han in youre riches ye wiln meve werre and bataille. I conseille you that ye beginne no bataille ne werre in trust of youre riches, for they ne sufficien not werres to mainteine; and therefore sayth a philosophre, That man that desireth and wol algates han werre shal never have suffisaunce, for the richer that he is the greter dispende must he make, if he wol have worship and victorie; and Salomon saith, that the greter riches that a man hath the mo dispendours he hath. And, dere Sire! a be it so that for your riches ye moun have muche folk, yet behoveth it not ne it is not good to beginne werre, wheras ye moun in other manere have pee unto youre worship and profite; for the victorie of batailles that ben in this world lith not in gret nombre or multitude of peple, ne in the vertue of man, but i lith in the will and in the hond of oure Lord God Almighty; and therefore Judas Machabens, which wa Goddes knight, whan he shulde fighte again his adversarie that hadde a greter nombre and a greter mul

titude of folk, and strengre than was the peple of this Machabee, yet he recomforted his litel compaignie, and sayde right in this wise ; Al so lightly (sayde he) may our Lord God Almighty yeve victorie to a fewe folk as to many folk, for the victorie of a bataille cometh not by the gret nombre of peple, but it cometh from oure Lord God of heven. And, dere Sire ! for as muchel as ther is no man certaine if it be worthy that God yeve him victorie or not, after that Salomon sayth, Therefore every man shulde gretly drede werres to beginne ; and because that in batailles fallen many perils, and it happeth other while that as sone is the gret man slain as the litel man ; and, as it is ywritten in the second book of Kinges, The dedes of batailles ben aventurous, and nothing certain, for as lightly is on hurt with a spere as another ; and for ther is gret peril in werre, therefore shulde a man flee and eschue werre in as muchel as a man may goodly ; for Salomon sayth, He that loveth peril shal falle in peril.

After that Dame Prudence had spoken in this manere Melibee answerd and saide : I see wel, Dame Prudence, that by youre faire wordes and by youre resons that ye han shewed me that the werre liketh you nothing ; but I have not yet herd your conseil how I shal do in this nede.

Certes, quod she, I conseille you that ye accorde with youre adverfaries, and that ye have pees with hem ; for Seint James sayth in his Epistle that by con-

corde and pees the smale riches wexen grete, and by debat and discorde grete riches fallendown : and ye knowen wel that on of the grettest and moste sovaine thing that is in this world is unitee and pees ; and therefore sayde oure Lord Jesu Crist to his apostles in this wise, Wel happy and blessed ben they that loven and purchasen pees, for they ben called the children of God. A ! quod Melibee, now see I wel that ye loven not min honour ne my worshipec. Ye knowen wel that min adversaries han begonne this debat and brige by hir outrage, and ye see wel that they ne requeren ne prayen me not of pees, ne they axen not to be reconciled ; wol ye than that I go and meke me and obeye me to hem, and cric hem mercie ? forsoth that were not my worshipec ; for right as men sayn that overgret homlineesse engendreth dispreising, so fareth it by to gret humilitee or mekeuesse.

Than began Dame Prudence to make semblaunt of wrathe, and sayde, Certes, Sire, (sauf your grace) I love youre honour and youre profite as I do min owen, and ever have don, ye ne non other seyn never the contrary : and if I had sayde that ye shulde han purchasid the pees and the reconciliation I ne hadde not muchel mislake me ne sayde amis ; for the wise man sayth, The diffention beginneth by another man, and the reconciling beginneth by thyself : and the prophete saith, Flee shrewednesse and do goodnesse ; seke pees and folwe it, in as muchel as in thee is. Yet say

I not that ye shuln rather pursue to youre adversaries for pees than they shuln to you, for I know wel that ye ben so hard-herted that ye wol do nothing for me; and Salomon sayth, He that hath over hard an herte atte laste he shal mishappe and mistide.

Whan Melibee had herd Dame Prudence make semblaunt of wrath he sayde in this wise: Dame, I pray you that ye be not displefed of thinges that I say, for I knowe wel that I am angry and wroth, and that is no wonder, and they that ben wroth woten not wel what they don ne what they sayn; therfore the prophete sayth, that troubled eyen han no clere sighte. But sayth and conseilleth me as you liketh, for I am redy to do right as ye wol desire; and if ye reprove me of my folie I am the more holden to love you and to preise you; for Salomon saith, that he that reproveth him that doth folie he shal find greter grace than he that deceiveth him by swete wordes.

Than sayde Dame Prudence, I make no semblaunt of wrath ne of anger but for youre grete profite; for Salomon saith, He is more wroth that reproveth or chideth a fool for his folie, shewing him semblaunt of wrath, than he that supporteth him and preifeth him in his misdoing, and laugheth at his folie; and this same Salomon saith afterward, that by the forweful visage of a man, that is to sayn, by the sory and hevy countenance of a man, the fool correcteth and amendeth himself.

Than said Melibee, I shal not conne answer
to many faire reasons as ye patten to me and she
sayth shortly youre will and youre conseil, and
al redy to performe and fulfille it.

Than Dame Prudence discovered all hire will
him, and saide, I consaille you, quod she, above
things that ye make pees betwene God and you
be reconciled unto him and to his grace, for as I
sayde you herebeforen, God hath suffered you to
this tribelation and disese for youre sinnes: and
do as I say you God wol sende youre aduersarie
to you, and make hem falle at youre feet, redy
your will and youre commandements; for Sak
sayth, When the condition of man is plesant
king unto God he chaungeth the hertes of the
aduersaries, and constreineth hem to besechen hi
pees and of grace. And I pray you let me speke
your aduersaries in prevee place, for they shul
knowe that it be of youre will or youre assent, and
whan I knowe hir will and hir entente I may con
you the more seurely.

Dame, quod Melibeus, doth youre will and y
liking, for I putte me wholly in youre disposition
ordinaunce.

Than Dame Prudence, whan she sey the good
of hire husbond, delibered unto hire, and toke a
hire self, thinking how she might bring this need
to goode ende; and whan she sey hire time she

for thise adversaries to come unto hire in to a priver place, and shewed wisely unto hem the grete goodes that comen of pees, and the grete harmes and perils that ben in werre; and saide to hem in a goodly manere how that hem oughte have gret repentaunce of the injuries and wronges that they hadden don to Melibeus hire lord, and unto hire and to hire doughter.

And whan they herden the goodly wordes of Dame Prudence they weren so furprised and ravished, and hadden so gret joye of hire, that wonder was to telle. A, Lady! quod they, ye have shewed unto us the blessing of swetenesse, after the saying of David the prophete; for the reconciling which we be not worthy to have in no manere, but we oughten requeren it with grete contrition and humilitee, ye of youre grete goodnesse have presented unto us. Now see we wel that the science and conning of Salomon is ful trewe; for he saith, that swete wordes multiplien and encreasen frendes, and maken shrewes to be debonaire and meke.

Certes, quod they, we puttenoure dede and all oure matere and cause al holly in youre good will, and ben redy to obeye unto the speche and commaundement of my Lord Melibeus; and therfore, dere and benigne Lady! we praye you and beseeche you, as mekely as we conne and moun, that it like unto youre grete goodnesse to fulfille in dede youre goodly wordes; for we consideren and knowelechen that we han offended and greved my Lord Melibeus out of mesure, so fer forth

that we ben not of power to maken him amende, therefore we oblige and binde us and oure frende to do all his will and his commaundements; but aventure he hath swiche hevynesse and swiche wondrous ward, because of our offence, that he wol enyeen us swiche a peine as we moun not bere ne suste and therefore, noble Ladie! we beseeche to youre manly pittece to take swiche avise ment in this nede we be oure frendes ben not disherited and destitute thurgh oure folie.

Certes, quod Prudence, it is an hard thing and perilous that a man putte him all outrely in the tration and jugement and in the might and power of his enemy; for Salomon sayth, Levech me and yeve credence to that that I shall say; To thy sone, to thy wif, to thy frend, ne to thy brother, ne yeve thou never might ne maistrice over thy body while thou live. Now, sith he defendeth that a man shulde not yeve his brother ne to his frend the might of his body to a stronger reson he defendeth and forbedeth a man yeve himself to his enemy. And natheles I comend you that ye mistruste not my lord, for I wot we know veraily that he is debonaire and meke, courteous, and nothing desirous ne covetous of gold or riches, for ther is nothing in this world that he desireth save only worshipe and honour. Fortherre I know wel and am right sure that he shal nothin in this nede withouten my conseil, and I shal so

ken in this cas that by the grace of oure Lord God ye shal be reconciled unto us.

Than saiden they with o vois, Worshipful Lady! we putten us and oure goodes al fully in youre will and disposition, and ben redy to come what day that it like unto youre nobleffe to limite us or assigne us for to make oure obligation and bond as strong as it liketh unto youre goodnesse, that we moun fulfille the will of you and of my Lord Melibee.

Whan Dame Prudence had herd the answer of thise men she bad hem go agein prively, and she retourned to hire Lord Melibee, and told him how she fond his adversarieful repentaunt, knowleching ful lowly hir finnes and trespas, and how they weren redy to suffren all peine, requering and preying him of mercy and pitee.

Than saide Melibee, He is wel worthy to have pardon and foryevenesse of his sinne that excuseth not his sinne, but knowlecheth and repenteth him, axing indulgence; for Senek saith, Ther is the remission and foryevenesse wher as the confession is, for confession is neighebour to innocence: and therefore I assente and conferme me to have pees; but it is good that we do nought withouten the assent and will of oure frendes.

Than was Prudence right glad and joyeful, and saide, Certes, Sire, ye han wel and goodly answered; for right as by the conseil, assent, and helpe, of your

frendes ye han be stired to venge you and me
right so withouten hir conseil shul ye not
ne have pees with youre adversaries; for
faith, Ther is nothing so good by way of
thing to be unbounde by him that it was y

And than Dame Prudence, withouten del
ing, sent anon hire messageres for hir kin
olde frendes which that were trewe and wil
hem by ordre in the presence of Melibee
tere as it is above expressed and declared,
hem that they wold yeve hir avis and co
were best to do in this nede. And whan
frendes hadden taken hir avis and delibera
foresaid matere, and hadden examined it l
finesse and gret diligence, they yaven ful co
have pees and reste, and that Melibee shu
with good herte his adversaries to foryeve
mercy.

And whan Dame Prudence had herd th
hire Lord Melibee, and the conseil of his l
cord with hire will and hire entention, she
der glad in hire herte, and sayde, Ther is
verbe, quod she, sayth, that the goodnesse
maist do this day do it, and abide not ne d
til to morwe; and therfore I conseille tha
your messageres, swiche as ben discret and
to youre adversaries, telling hem on youre b
if they wol trete of pees and of accord that

hem withouten delay or taryng to come unto us. Which thing parfourmed was indede. And whan thise trespassours and repenting folk of hir folies, that is to sayn, the adversaries of Melibee, hadden herd what thise messageres sayden unto hem they weren right glade and joyeful, and answerden ful mekely and benignely, yelding graces and thankinges to hir Lord Melibee and to all his compaignie, and shopen hem withouten delay to go with the messageres, and obeye to the commaundement of hir Lord Melibee.

And right anon they token hir way to the court of Melibee, and token with hem som of hir trewe frendes to make feith for hem and for to ben hir borwes. And whan they were comen to the presence of Melibee he saide hem thise wordes: It stant thus, quod Melibee, and soth it is that ye causeles and withouten skill and reson han don grete injuries and wronges to me and to my wif Prudence, and to my doughter also, for ye han entred into myn hous by violence, and have don swiche outrage that alle men knowen wel that ye han deserved the deth; and therefore wol I know and wete of you whether ye wol putte the punishing and chastising, and the vengeaunce, of this outrage in the will of me and of my wif or ye wol not.

Than the wisest of hem three answered for hem alle, and saide; Sire, quod he, we knowen wel that we ben unworthy to come to the court of so gret a lord and so worthy as ye ben, for we han so gretly mi-

flaken us, and han offended and agilte in
agein your high lordshipe, that trewely
served the deth; but yet for the grete ge
debonairetee that all the world witness
perfone we submitten us to the excellenc
nitee of youre gracious lordshipe, and be
beye to alle youre comandements, besech
of youre merciabie pitee ye wol consider
repentance and lowe submissioun, and gr
yevenesse of oure outragious trespas and
wel we knowen that youre liberal grac
stretchen hem forther into goodnesse th
outragious giltes and trespas into wicke
it that cursedly and dampnably we han
your high lordshipe.

Than Melibee toke hem up fro the ge
nignely, and received hir obligations an
by hir othes upon hir plegges and borwes
hem a certain day to retourne unto his co
ceive and accept sentence and jugement
wolde commande to be don on hem by
foresaid; which thinges ordeined every
ed to his hous.

And whan that Dame Prudence saw
freined, and axed hire Lord Melibee wh
he thoughte to taken of his adversaries?

To which Melibee answerd and saide;
he, I thinke and purpose me fully to diss

all that ever they han, and for to putte hem in exile for ever.

Certes, quod Dame Prudence, this were a cruel sentence, and muchel agein reson, for ye ben riche ynough, and han no nede of other mennes good; and ye might lightly in this wise gete you a covetous name, which is a vicious thing, and oughte to be eschewed of every good man, for after the sawe of the apostle covetise is rote of alle harmes; and therfore it were better for you to lese muchel good of your owen than for to take of hir good in this manere; for better it is to lese good with worship than to winne good with vilanie and shame: and every man oughte to do his diligence and his besynesse to gete him a good name; and yet shal he not only besie him in keping his good name, but he shal also enforcen him alway to do som thing by which he may renouvelle his good name; for it is written that the olde good los or good name of a man is sone gon and passed whan it is not newed. And as touching that ye sayn, that ye wol exile your adversaries, that thinketh me muchel agein reson and out of mesure, considered the power that they han yeven you upon himself; and it is written, that he is worthy to lese his privilegethat misuseth the might and the power that is yeven him. And I sette cas ye might enjoine hem that peine by right and by lawe, (which I trowe ye mowe not do) I say ye might not putte it to execution peraventure, and than it were like to retourne

to the werre as it was beforne : and therfore if you wol that men do you obeisaunce ye must deme more curteisly, that is to sayn, ye must yeve more esie sentences and jugements ; for it is written, he that most curteisly commandeth to him men most obeyen. And therfore I pray you that in this necessitee and in this nedee ye caste you to overcome youre herte ; for Senek sayth, that he that overcometh his herte overcometh twies ; and Tullius saith, Ther is nothing so commendable in a gret lord as whan he is debonaire and meke, and appefeth him lightly. And I pray you that ye wol now forbere to do vengeance in swiche a manere that your good name may be kept and conserved, and that men mown have cause and mater to preise you of pitee and of mercy, and that ye have no cause to repente you of thing that ye don ; for Sencke saieth, He overcometh in an evil manere that repenteth of his victorie. Wherfore I pray you let mercy be in youre herte, to the effect and entente that God Almighty have mercy upon you in his last jugement ; for Scint James saith in his epistle, Jugement withoute mercy shal be do to him that hath no mercy of another wight.

Whan Melibee had herd the grete skilles and re-fons of Dame Prudence, and hire wise informations and techinges, his herte gan encline to the will of his wif, considering hire trewe entente, enforced him anon, and assented fully to werken after hire conseil,

anked God, of whom procedeth all goodnesse
l'virtue, that him sent a wif of so gret discre-
And whan the day came that his adversaries
appere in his presence he spake to hem ful
y, and saide in this wise: Al be it so that of youre
and high presumption and folie, and of youre
ence and unconting, ye have misborne you and
fed unto me, yet for as muchel as I see and he-
oure grete humilitee, and that ye ben sory and
tant of youre giltes, it constreinet me to do you
and mercy; wherfore I receive you into my
and foryeve you outrely alle the offences, in-
and wronges, that ye have don agein me and
to this effect and to this ende, that God of his
s mercie wol at the time of oure dying foryeve
e giltes that we han trespased to him in this
red world; for douteles if we be sory and re-
it of the finnes and giltes which we han trespa-
the sight of oure Lord God, he is so free and
ciable that he wol foryeven us oure giltes, and
n us to the blisse that never hath ende. *Amen.*

THE MONKES PROLOGUE.

WHAN ended was the Tale of Melibee 13895
 And of Prudence and hire benignece
 Our Hoste saide, As I am faithful man,
 And by the precious *corpus Madrian*,
 I hadde lever than a barell of ale
 That goode lese my wif had herde this Tale, 13900
 For she n'is no thing of swiche patience
 As was this Melibeeus wif Prudence.

By Goddes bones whan I bete my knaves
 She bringeth me the grete clobbed staves,
 And cryeth, Slee the dogges everich on, 13905
 And breke hem bothe bak and every bon.

And if that any neighebour of mine
 Wol not in chirche to my wif encline,
 Or be so hardy to hire to trespase,
 Whan she cometh home she rampeth in my face,
 And cryeth, Falso coward t'wreke thy wif: 13910
 By *corpus Domini* I wol have thy knif,
 And thou shalt have my distaf and go spinne.
 Fro day til night right thus she wol beginne.

Alas! she saith, that ever I was yshape 13915
 To wed a milkfop or a coward ape,
 That wol ben overladdie with every wight:
 Thou darst not stonden by thy wives right.

¶. 13898. *corpus Madrian*] The relics of St. Maternus, Gloss.
Un. But I can find no such saint in the common legendaries.

This is my lif but if that I wol fight,
 And out at dore anon I mote me dight, 13920
 Or elles I am lost, but if that I
 Be like a wilde leon fool-hardy.

I wote wel she wol do me flee som day
 Som neighebour, and thanne go my way,
 For I am perilous with knif in honde 13925
 Al be it that I dare not hire withstonde,
 For she is bigge in armes by my faith,
 That shal he finde that hire misdoth or faith.
 But let us passe away fro this matere.

My Lord the Monk, quod he, be mery of chere,
 For ye shul telle a Tale trewely. 13931
 Lo! Rouchester stondeth here faste by;
 Ride forth, min owen Lord, breke not our game.
 But by my trouthe I can not telle youre name;
 Whether shal I call you my Lord Dan John, 13935
 Or Dan Thomas, or elles Dan Albion?
 Of what hous be ye by your fader kin?
 I vow to God thou hast a ful faire skin.
 It is a gentil pasture ther thou gost;
 Thou art not like a penaunt or a gott. 13940

Upon my faith thou art som officer,
 Som worthy sextein, or som celerer,
 For by my fadres soule, as to my dome,
 Thou art a maister whan thou art at home;
 No poure cloisterer, ne non novice, 13945
 But a governour bothe ware and wise,

And therewithal of braunes and of bones
 A right wel faring persone for the nones.
 I pray to God yeve him confusion
 That first thee brought into religion. 13950
 Thou woldest han ben a trede-foul a right
 Haddest thou as grete leve as thou hast might
 To parfourme all thy lust: in engendrure
 Thou haddest begeten many a creature.
 Alas! why werest thou so wide a cope? 13955
 God yeve me forwe but and I were pope
 Not only thou but every mighty man,
 Though he were shore ful high upon his pan,
 Shuld have a wif, for al this world is lorn,
 Religion hath take up all the corn 13960
 Of treading, and we borel men ben shrimpes;
 Of feble trees ther comen wretched impea.
 This maketh that our heires ben so sclendre
 And feble that they moun not wel engendre;
 This maketh that our wives wol assaye 13965
 Religious folk, for they moun better paye
 Of Venus payements than mowen we;
 God wote no Lusheburghes payen ye.

v. 13948. *A right wel faring*] I have no better authority for the insertion of *right* than ed. *Urr*.

v. 13968. *Lusheburghes*] Base coins, probably first imported, as Skinner thinks, from *Luxembourg*. They are mentioned in the stat. 25 E. III. c. 2.; "La monie appelle *Lutynbourg*," and in *P. P.* fol. 82, b.;

As in *Lusburgh* is a luther alay, yet loketh like sterling.

But be not wroth, my Lord, though that I play;
 Ful oft in game a sothe have I herd say. 13970

This worthy Monke toke all in patience,
 And faide, I wol don all my diligence,
 As fer as souneth into honestee,
 To tellen you a Tale, or two or three;
 And if you list to herken hiderward 13975
 I wol you sayn the lif of Seint Edward,
 Or elles tragedies first I wol telle,
 Of which I have an hundred in my celle.

Tragedie is to sayn a certain storie,
 As olde bookes maken us memorie, 13980
 Of him that stood in gret prosperitee,
 And is yfallen out of high degree
 In to miserie, and endeth wretchedly;
 And they ben versified comunly
 Of six feet, which men clepen Exametron : 13985
 In prose eke ben endited many on,
 And eke in metre in many a sondry wise.
 Lo this declaring ought ynough suffice.

Now herkeneth if you liketh for to here.
 But first I you besече in this matere, 13990
 Though I by ordre telle not thise thinges,
 Be it of popes, emperoures, or kinges,
 After hir ages, as men written finde,
 But telle hem som before and som behinde,
 As it now cometh to my remembrance, 13995
 Have me excused of min ignorance.

To bring hem out of hir aduersitee ;
For certain whan that Fortune list to flee
Ther may no man of hire the cours withh
Let no man trust on blinde prosperitee ;
Beth ware by thise ensamples trewe and e

Lucifer.

At Lucifer, though he an angel were
And not a man, at him I wol beginne ;
For though Fortune may non angel dere,
From high degree yet fell he for his sinne
Doun into helle, wheras he yet is inne.
O Lucifer ! brightest of angels alle,
Now art thou Sathanas, that maist not tw
Out of miserie in which that thou art falle

Adam.

Lo ! Adam in the feld of Damascene
With Goddes owen finger wrought was h

And welte all Paradis saving o tree.
 Had never workilly man so high degree
 As Adam, til he for misgovernance
 Was driven out of his prosperitee
 To labour, and to helle, and to meschance. 14020

Sampson.

Lo! Sampson, which that was annunciat
 By the angel long or his nativitee,
 And was to God Almighty consecrat,
 And stode in nobleffe while he mighte see:
 Was never swiche another as was he, 14025
 To speke of strength and therto hardinesse;
 But to his wives tolde he his secree,
 Thurgh which he slow himself for wretchednesse.

Sampson, this noble and mighty champion,
 Withouten wepen save his handes twey 14030
 He slow and all to-rente the leon,
 Toward his wedding walking by the wey.
 His false wif coude him so plese and pray
 Til she his conseil knewe, and she untrew
 Unto his foos his conseil gan bewray, 14035
 And him forsoke, and toke another newe.

Three hundred foxes toke Sampson for ire,
 And all hir tayles he togeder bond,
 And set the foxes tayles all on fire,

†. 14021. *Sampson*] His tragedy is also in *Boccace*, b. i. c. 19,
 but our Author seems rather to have followed the original,
Judges xiv, xv, xvi.

Volume IV.

S

For he in every tayl had knit a bond, 140
 And they brent all the cornes in that lond,
 And all hir oliveres and vines eke.
 A thousand men he flow eke with his hond,
 And had no wepen but an asses cheke.

Whan they were slain so thurstid him that he
 Was wel nie lorne, for which he gan to preye 145
 That God wold on his peine han som pitee,
 And send him drinke, or elles moſte he deye;
 And of this asses cheke that was so dreye
 Out of a wang toth sprang anon a welle, 146
 Of which he drank ynough, shortly to ſeye.
 Thus help him God, as *Judicum* can telle.

By veray force at Gafa on a night,
 Maugre the Philistins of that citee,
 The gates of the toun he hath up plight, 147
 And on his bak ycaried hem hath he
 High on an hill, wher as men might hem ſe.
 O noble mighty Sampſon, leſe and dere!
 Haddeſt thou not told to women thy ſecree
 In all this world ne had ther ben thy pere. 148

This Sampſon never ſider drank ne wine,
 Ne on his hed came raſour non ne ſhere,
 By precept of the meſſager divine,
 For all his ſtrengthes in his heres were:
 And fully twenty winter yere by yere 149
 He hadde of Iſrael the governance;
 Put ſone ſhal he wepen many a tere,
 For women ſhuln him bringen to meſchance.

Unto his lemman Dalida he told
 That in his heres all his strengthe lay, 14070
 And falsely to his fomen she him sold;
 And sleping in hire barme upon a day
 She made to clip or shere his here away,
 And made his fomen al his craft espien;
 And whan that they him fond in this array 14075
 They bond him fast, and putten out his eyen.

But or his here was clipped or yshave
 Ther was no bond with which men might him bind,
 But now is he in prison in a cave,
 Wheras they made him at the querne grinde. 14080
 O noble Sampson, strongest of mankind,
 O whilom juge in glory and richeffe!
 Now mayest thou wepen with thin eyen blind
 Sith thou fro wele art falle in wretchednesse.

The ende of this caitif was as I shal seye: 14085
 His fomen made a feste upon a day,
 And made him as hir fool before hem pleye,
 And this was in a temple of gret array:
 But at the last he made a foule affray,
 For he two pillers shoke and made hem falle, 14090
 And doun fell temple and all, and ther it lay,
 And flow himself, and eke his fomen alle.

This is to sayn, the princes everich on,
 And eke three thousand bodies, were ther slain
 With falling of the gret temple of ston. 14095

✥. 14080. *the querne*] The mill; *kucerna*, *mola*, Island.

Hercules.

Of Hercules the soveraine conquerour
Singen his werkes laude, and high renown
For in his time of strength he was the flow
He slow and raft the skinne of the leon ;
He of Centaures laid the boist adoun ;
He Harpies slow, the cruel briddes felle ;
He golden apples raft fro the dragon ;
He drew out Cerberus, the hound of hell

He slow the cruel tirant Buziris,
And made his hors to fret him flesh and bone
He slow the firy serpent venemous ;
Of Achelous two hornes brake he on ;
And he slow Cacus in a cave of ston ;
He slow the geaunt Anteus the strong ;
He slow the grisely bore, and that anon ;
And bare the hevene on his neckke long.

never wight fith that the world began
 w. so many monstres as did he ;
 out the wide world his name ran,
 r his strength and for his high bountee ;
 ry reame went he for to see. 14121
 so strong that no man might him let ;
 : the worldes endes, faith Trophee,
 of boundes he a piller set.
 man had this noble champion 14125
 hte Deianire, as fresh as May ;
 thise clerkes maken mention,
 him sent a sherte fresh and gay :
 is sherte, alas and wala wa !
 ed was sotilly withalle, 14130
 that he had wered it half a day
 his flesh all from his bones falle.
 theles som clerkes hire excusen
 at highte Nessus, that it maked :
 y be I wol hire not accusen ; 14135
 is bak this sherte he wered al naked,
 his flesh was for the venim blaked ;
 an he saw non other remedie
 oles he hath himselven raked,
 no venime deigned him to die. 14140

13. *faith Trophee*] As all the best mss. agree in this
 have retained it, though I cannot tell what author
 to. The margin of C. 1 has this note ; " Ille vates
 orum *Trophæus*."—The editt. read—*for Trophee*.—

THE MONKS TALE.

Thus start this worthy mighty Hercules.
 Lo! who may trust on Fortune any throw?
 For him that folweth all this world of peas
 Or he be ware is oft ylaide ful lowe:
 Ful wise is he that can himselfen knowe. 14145
 Beth ware, for whan that Fortune list to glose
 Than waiteth the hire man to overthrowe
 By swiche a way as he wold lest suppose.

Nabuchodonosor.

The mighty trone, the precious tresor,
 The glorious sceptre, and real majestee, 14150
 That hadde the King Nabuchodonosor,
 With tonge unnethes may descryved be:
 He twies wan Jerusalem the citee,
 The vessell of the temple he with him ladde; 14155
 At Babiloine was his soveraine see,
 In which his glorie and his delit he hadde.

The fayrest children of the blood real
 Of Israel he did do gelde anon,
 And maked eche of hem to ben his thral. 14160
 Amonges other Daniel was on,
 That was the wisest child of everich on,
 For he the dremes of the king expounded,
 Wher as in Caldee clerk ne was ther non
 That wiste to what fin his dremes souned.
 This proude king let make a statue of gold 14165
 Sixty cubites long and seven in brede,

✠. 14151. *Nabuchodonosor*] For this history and the fol-
 lowing of Balthasar see *Daniel* i—v. The latter only is relate
Boccace, b. ii. c. xxiii.

To which image bothe yonge and old
 Commanded he to loute and have in drede,
 Or in a fourneis ful of flames rede
 He shuld be brent that wolde not obeie; 14170
 But never wold assenten to that dede
 Daniel, ne his yonge felawes tweye.

This king of kinges proud was and elat;
 He wend that God that sit in majestee
 Ne might him nat bereve of his estat: 14175
 But sodenly he lost his dignitee,
 And like a best him fered for to be,
 And ete hey as an oxe, and lay therout:
 In rain with wilde bestes walked he
 Til certain time was ycome about. 14180

And like an egles fethers wax his heres,
 His neyles like a briddes clawes were,
 Til God relefed him at certain yeres,
 And yaf him wit, and than with many a tere
 He thanked God, and ever his lif in fere 14185
 Was he to don amis, or more trespase:
 And til that time he laid was on his here
 He knew that God was ful of might and grace.

Balthasar.

His sone, which that highte Balthasar,
 That held the regne after his fadres day, 14190
 He by his fader coude not beware,
 For proude he was of herte and of array,
 And eke an ydolaster was he ay.
 His high estat assured him in pride;

But Fortune cast him down (and ther he lay) 14195
And sodenly his regne gan devide.

A feste he made unto his lordes alle
Upon a time, and made hem blithe be,
And than his officeres gan he calle;
Goth bringeth forth the vessels, quod he, 14200
Which that my fader in his prosperitee
Out of the temple of Jerusalem beraft,
And to our highe goddes thanke we
Of honour, that our eldres with us laft.

His wif, his lordes, and his concubines, 14205
Ay dronken, while hir appetites laft,
Out of thise noble vessels sondry wines.
And on a wall this king his eyen cast,
And saw an hand armes that wrote sul fast,
For fere of whiche he quoke and fiked sore: 14210
This hand, that Balthasar so sore agast,
Wrote *Mane techel Phares*, and no more.

In al that lond magicien was non
That coud expounen what this lettre ment,
But Daniel expouned it anon, 14215
And said, O King! God to thy fader lent
Glorie and honour, regne, tresour, and rent,
And he was proud and nothing God ne dradde,
And therfore God gret wreche upon him sent,
And him beraft the regne that he hadde. 14220

He was out cast of mannes compaignie,
With asses was his habitation,
And etc hey as a best in wete and drie,

Til that he knew by grace and by reson
 That God of heven hath domination 14225
 Over every regne and every creature,
 And than had God of him compassion,
 And him restored his regne and his figure.

Eke thou that art his sone art proud also,
 And knowest all thise thinges veraily, 14230
 And art rebel to God and art his fo :
 Thou dranke eke of his vessels boldely,
 Thy wif eke and thy wenches finfully
 Dranke of the same vessels sondry wines,
 And heried false goddes cursedly, 14235
 Therfore to thee yshapen ful gret pine is.

This hand was sent fro God that on the wall
 Wrote *Mane techel Phares*, trusteth me.
 Thy regne is don ; thou weyest nought at all :
 Divided is thy regne, and it shal be 14240
 To Medes and to Perses yeven, quod he.
 And thilke same night this king was slawe,
 And Darius occupied his degree,
 Though he therto had neither right ne lawe.

Lordinges, ensample hereby moun ye take 14245
 How that in lordship is no sikernesse,
 For whan that Fortune wol a man forsake
 She bereth away his regne and his richesse,
 And eke his frendes, bothe more and lesse ;
 For what man that hath frendes thurgh Fortune
 Mishap wol make hem enemies I gesse. 14251
 This proverbe is ful soth, and ful commune.

That no wight passed her in her chere,
Ne in linage ne in other gentilleffe.
Of kinges blood of Perse is she descended ;
I say not that she hadde most fairenesse,
But of hire shape she might not ben amended

From hire childhode I finde that she fledde
Office of woman, and to wode she went,
And many a wilde hartes blood she shedde
With arwes brode that she to hem sent ;
She was so swift that she anon hem hent :
And whan that she was elder she wold kille
Leons, leopards, and beres al to-rent,
And in hire armes weld hem at hire wille.

She dorst the wilde bestes dennes seke,
And rennen in the mountaignes all the nyght
And slepe under the bush ; and she coude eke
Wrafflen by veray force and veray might
With any vone man. were he never so wight

She kept hire maidenhode from every wight; 14275
To no man deigned hire for to be bonde.

But at the last hire frendes han hire maried
To Odenat, a prince of that contree,
Al were it so that she hem longe taried,
And ye shul understonden how that he 14280
Hadde swiche fantasies as hadde she;
But natheles whan they were knit in fere
They lived in joye and in felicittee,
For eche of hem had other lefe and dere;

Save o thing, that she n'olde never assente 14285
By no way that he shulde by hire lie
But ones, for it was hire plaine entente
To have a childe the world to multiplie;
And al so sone as that she might espie
That she was not with childe with that dede, 14290
Than wold she suffer him don his fantasie
Eftsoone, and not but ones out of drede.

And if she were with child at thilke cast
No more shuld he playen thilke game
Till fully fourty dayes weren past, 14295
Than wold she ones suffire him do the same.
Al were this Odenate wild or tame
He gate no more of hire, for thus she sayde,

¶ 14295. *Till fully fourty dayes*] There is a confusion in this passage which might have been avoided if our Author had resorted to Trebellius Pollio, *Trig. Tyrann. c. xxix. de Zenobia*; "*Quum semel concubisset, expectatis mensibus, continebat se si prægnans esset; sin minus, iterum potestatem quærendis liberis dabat.*"

It was to wives lecherie and shame
In other cas if that men with hem playde. 14300

Two fances by this Odenate had she,
The which she kept in vertue and lettrare.
But now unto our Tale turne we.
I say so worshipful a creature,
And wise therwith, and large with manere, 14305
So penible in the werre, and curteis eke,
Ne more labour might in werre endure,
Was non, though all this world men sholden see.

Hire riche array ne mighte not be told,
As wel in vessell as in hire clothing; 14310
She was all clad in pierrie and in gold;
And eke she lefte not for non hunting
To have of sondry tonges ful knowing,
Whan that she leiser had, and for to entend
To lernen bookes was all hire liking, 14315
How she in vertue might hire lif dispend.

And shortly of this storie for to trete,
So doughty was hire husband and eke she
That they conquered many reges grete
In the orient, with many a faire citee 14320
Appertenaunt unto the majestee
Of Rome, and with strong hand held hem ful fast,
Ne never might hir fomen don hem flee
Ay while that Odenates dayes last.

Hire batailles, who so list hem for to rede, 14325
Againe Sapor the king, and other mo,

And how that all this processe fell in dede,
 Why she conquered, and what tittle therto,
 And after of hire mischefe and hire wo,
 How that she was beseged and ytake, I4330
 Let him unto my maister Petrark go,
 That writeth ynough of this I undertake.

Whan Odenate was ded she mightily
 The regnes held, and with hire propre hond
 Agains hir foos she fought so cruelly I4335
 That ther n'as king ne prince in all that lond
 That he n'as glad if he that grace fond
 That she ne wolde upon his lond werreye;
 With hire they maden alliaunce by bond
 To ben in pees and let hire ride and pleye. I4340

'The Emperour of Rome Claudius;
 Ne him beforn the Romain Galien,
 Ne dorste never be so corageous,
 Ne non Ermin ne non Egiptien, I4345
 Ne Surrien ne non Arabien,
 Within the feld ne dorste with hire fight,
 Lest that she wold hem with hire hondes slen,
 Or with hire meinie putten hem to flight.

In kinges habite wente hire sones two
 As heires of hir fadres regnes alle, I4350
 And Heremanno and Timolao
 Hir names were, as Persiens hem calle.
 But ay Fortune hath in hire hony galle:
 This mighty quene may no while endure;

Fortune out of hire regne made hire falle 14355
To wretchednesse and to misaventure.

Aurelian, whan that the governance
Of Rome came into his honde tway,
He shope upon this queene to do vengeance,
And with his legions he toke his way 14360
Toward Zenobie; and, shortly for to say,
He made hire flee, and atte last hire hent,
And fettred hire and eke hire children tway,
And wan the lond, and home to Rome he went.

Amonges other thinges that he wan 14365
Hire char, that was with gold wrought and pierrie,
This grete Romain, this Aurelian,
Hath with him lad for that men shuld it see.
Beforen his triumphe walketh she,
With gilte chaines on hire necke honging, 14370
Crowned she was, as after hire degree,
And ful of pierrie charged hire clothing.

Alas, Fortune! she that whilom was
Dredeful to kinges and to emperoures,
Now gaureth all the peple on hire, alas! 14375
And she that helmed was in starke floures,
And wan by force tounes stronge and toures,
Shal on hire hed now were a vitremite,
And she that bare the sceptre ful of floures
Shal bere a distaf, hire cost for to quite. 14380

v. 14378. *a vitremite*] This word is differently written in the mss. *vitrymite*, *vitermite*, *wintermite*, *vitryte*. The edit. read *autremite*, which is equally unintelligible.

Nero.

Although that Nero were as vicious
 As any fend that lith ful low adoun,
 Yet he, as telleth us Suetonius,
 This wide world had in subjection,
 Both est and west, south and septentrioun. 14385
 Of rubies, saphires, and of perles white,
 Were all his clothes brouded up and doun,
 For he in gemmes gretly gan delite.

More delicat, more pompous of array,
 More proude, was never emperour than he, 14390
 That ilke cloth that he had wered o day
 After that time he n'olde it never see:
 Nettes of gold threde had he gret plentee
 To fish in Tiber whan him list to play:
 His lustes were as law in his degree, 14395
 For Fortune as his frend wold him obay.

He Rome brente for his delicacie;
 The Senatours he slow upon a day
 To heren how that men wold wepe and crie,
 And slow his brother, and by his suster lay. 14400
 His moder made he in pitous array,

¶ 14385. *south and septentrioun*] The mss. read *north*; but there can be no doubt of the propriety of the correction, which was first made, I believe, in ed. *Urr.* In the *Rom. de la R.* from whence great part of this tragedy of Nero is translated, the passage stands thus, ver. 6501.;

Ce desleial, que je te dy,
 Et d'orient et de miidy,
 D'occident, de septentrion.
 Fint-il la jurisdiction.

For he hire wombe let flitten, to behold
 Wher he conceived was, so wala wa!
 That he so litel of his moder told.

No tere out of his eyen for that sight
 Ne came, but sayd a faire woman was she,
 Gret wonder is how that he coud or might
 Be domesman of hire dede beautee.
 The wine to bringen him commanded he,
 And dranke anon; no other wo he made.
 Whan might is joined unto crueltee,
 Alas! to depe wol the venime wade.

In youthe a maister had this emperour
 To techer him lettrure and curtesie:
 For of moralitee he was the flour,
 As in his time, but if bookes lie;
 And while this maister had of him maistri
 He maked him so conning and so souple
 That longe time it was or tyrannie
 Or any vice dorst in him uncouple.

This Seneka, of which that I devise,
 Because Nero had of him swiche drede,
 For he fro vices wold him ay chastise
 Discretly, as by word and not by dede;
 Sire, he wold say, an emperour mote nede

¶ 14408. *domesman*] Judge; the word in Boethius
 also related this story, is *cenfor*, l. ii. met. vi.;

Ora non tinxit lacrymis, sed esse

Cenfor extincti potuit decoris—

which our Author has thus rendered in his prose ver-
 "no tere wette his face, but he was so harde hert
 "might be *domasman* or judge of her dedde beaute

bus, and haten tyrannie ;
 h he made him in a bathe to blede
 e his armes till he muste die.
 Nero had eke of a custumaunce
 ageins his maister for to rise, I4430
 sterward him thought a gret grevaunce,
 he made him dien in this wise.
 eles this Seneka the wise
 a bathe to die in this manere
 han han another turmentise : I4435
 s hath Nero slain his maister dere.
 ell it so that Fortune list no lenger
 ie pride of Nero to cherice,
 gh that he were strong yet was she stronger.
 ghte thus; by God I am to nice I4440
 man that is fulfilled of vice
 egree, and Emperour him calle :
 out of his fete I wol him trice;
 : lest weneth sonest shal he falle.
 eple rose upon him on a night I4445
 efaute, and whan he it espied
 s dores anon he hath him dight
 ad ther he wend han ben allied
 ed fast, and ay the more he cried
 r shetten they hir dores alle; I4450
 he wel he had himself misgied,
 t his way; no lenger dorst he calle.

The peple cried and rombled up and down;
 That with his eres herd he how they sayde,
 Wher is this false tyrant, this Neroun? 14455
 For fere almost out of his wit he brayde,
 And to his goddes pitoussly he preide
 For socour, but it mighte not betide:
 For drede of this him thoughte that he deide,
 And ran into a gardin him to hide. 14460

And in this gardin fond he cherles tweye
 That faten by a fire gret and red,
 And to thise cherles two he gan to preye
 To slen him, and to girden of his hed,
 That to his body whan that he were ded 14465
 Were no despit ydon for his defame.
 Himself he slow, he coud no better rede,
 Of which Fortune lough and hadde a game.

Holofernes.

Was never capitaine under a king
 That regnes mo put in subiection, 14470
 Ne stronger was in feld of alle thing
 As in his time, ne greter of renoun,
 Ne more pompous in high presumption,
 Than Holoferne, which that Fortune ay kist
 So likerously, and lad him up and down, 14475
 Til that his hed was of or that he wist.

Not only that this world had him in awe
 For lesing of richesse and libertee,
 But he made every man reneie his lawe.

Nabuchodonosor was God, sayd he; 14480

Non other god ne shulde honoured be.

Ageins his heste ther dare no wight trespase

Save in Bethulia, a strong citce,

Wher Eliachim a preeft was of that place.

But take kepe of the deth of Holoferne : 14485

Amid his host he dronken lay a night

Within his tente, large as is a berne;

And yet for all his pompe and all his might

Judith, a woman, as he lay upright

Sleping, his hed of smote, and fro his tente 14490

Ful prively she stole from every wight,

And with his hed unto hire toun she wente.

Antiochus.

What nedeth it of King Antiochus

To tell his high and real majestee,

His gret pride, and his werkes venimous? 14495

For swiche another was ther non as he :

Redeth what that he was in Machabe,

And redeth the proud wordes that he seid,

And why he fell from his prosperitee,

And in an hill how wretchedly he deid. 14500

✧. 14484 *Wher Eliachim*] I cannot find any priest of this name in the book of *Judith*: The High Priest of Jerusalem is called *Jocim* in c. iv, which name would suit the verse better than *Eliachim*.

✧. 14493. *Antiochus*] This tragedy is a poetical paraphrase of second *Maccabees*, chap. ix.

Fortune him had enhaunfed fo in pride
 That veraily he wend he might attaine
 Unto the fterres upon every fide,
 And in a balaunce weyen eche mountaine,
 And all the floodes of the fee reftraine : 14505
 And Goddes peple had he moft in hate,
 Hem wold he fleen in torment and in peine,
 Wening that God ne might his pride abate.

And for that Nichanor and Timothee
 With Jewes were venquifhed mightily, 14510
 Unto the Jewes fwiche an hate had he
 That he bad greithe his char ful haftily,
 And fware and fayde ful despitoufly
 Unto Jerufalem he wold eftfone,
 To wreke his ire on it ful cruelly; 14515
 But of his purpos was he let ful fone.

God for his manace him fo fore fmote
 With invifible wound, ay incurable,
 That in his guttes carfe it fo and bote
 Thatte his peines weren importable; 14520
 And certainly the wreche was refonable,
 For many a mannes guttes did he peine;
 But from his purpos curfed and damnable,
 For all his fmerte, he n'olde him not reftraine;

But bade anon apparailen his hofl. 14525
 And fodenly, or he was of it ware,
 God daunted all his pride and all his boft;

For he so fore fell out of his chare
 That it his limmes and his skinne to-tare,
 So that he neither mighte go ne ride, 14530
 But in a chaire men about him bare,
 Alle forbrused bothe bak and side.

The wreche of God him smote so cruelly
 That thurgh his body wicked wormes crept,
 And therwithal he stanke so horribly 14535
 That non of all his meinie that him kept,
 Whether so that he woke or elles slept,
 Ne mighte not of him the stinke endure.
 In this mischiefe he wailed and eke wept,
 And knew God lord of every creature. 14540

To all his host and to himself also
 Ful wlatom was the stinke of his carcine;
 No man ne mighte him beren to ne fro;
 And in this stinke and this horrible peine
 He starf ful wretchedly in a mountaine. 14545
 Thus hath this robbour and this homicide,
 That many a man made to wepe and pleine,
 Swiche guerdon as belongeth unto pride.

Alexander.

The storie of Alexandre is so commune
 That every wight that hath discretioun 14550
 Hath herd somewhat or all of his fortune.
 This wide world, as in conclusioun,
 He wan by strength, or for his high renoun

They weren glad for pees unto him fende.
The pride of man and best he layd adoun,
Wher so he came, unto the worldes ende.

Comparifon might never yet be maked
Betwix him and another conquerour,
For al this world for drede of him hath quake
He was of knighthode and of fredome flour;
Fortune him maked the heir of hire honour.
Save wine and women nothing might affwag
His high entente in armes and labour,
So was he ful of leonin corage.

What pris were it to him though I you told
Of Darius, and an hundred thousand mo
Of kinges, princes, dukes, erles bold,
Which he conquered, and brought hem into
I say as fer as man may ride or go
The world was his; what shuld I more devise
For though I wrote or told you ever mo
Of his knighthode it mighte not suffice.

Twelf yere he regned, as faith Machabe:
Philippus sone of Macedoine he was,
That first was king in Greece the contree.
O worthy gentil Alexandre! alas
That ever shuld thee fallen swiche a cas!
Enpoisoned of thyn owen folke thou were;
Thy fis Fortune hath turned into an as,
And yet for thee ne wept she never a tere.

Who shal me yeven teres to complaine
The deth of gentilleffe and of fraunchise,

That all this world welded in his demaine,
 And yet him thought it mighte not suffice?
 So ful was his corage of high emprise. 14585
 Alas! who shal me helpen to endite
 Falsse Fortune, and poison to despise?
 The whiche two of all this wo I wite.

Julius Cesar.

By wisdome, manhode, and by gret labour,
 From humblehede to real majestee 14590
 Up rose he Julius the conquerour,
 That wan all the occident by lond and see
 By strengthe of hond or elles by trettee,
 And unto Rome made hem tributarie,
 And sith of Rome the Emperour was he 14595
 Til that Fortune wexe his adversarie.

O mighty Cesar! that in Theffalie
 Ageins Pompeius, father thin in lawe,
 Thar of the orient had all the chivalrie
 As fer as that the day beginneth dawe, 14600
 Thou thurgh thy knighthode hast hem take and flawe,
 Save few folk that with Pompeius fledde,
 Thurgh which thou put all the orient in awe,
 Thanke Fortune that so wel thee spedde.

But now a litel while I wol bewaile 14605
 This Pompeius, this noble governour
 Of Rome, which that fled at this bataille.
 I say en of his men, a falsse traitour,
 His hed of smote, to winnen him favour

Of Julius, and him the hed he brought : 14610
 Alas, Pompeie ! of the orient conquerour,
 That Fortune unto swiche a fin thee brought.

To Rome again repaireth Julius
 With his triumphe laureat ful hie,
 But on a time Brutus and Cassius, 14615
 That ever had of his high estat envie,
 Ful prively had made conspiracie
 Ageins this Julius in sotil wife,
 And cast the place in which he shulde die
 With bodekins, as I shal you devise. 14620

This Julius to the Capitolie wente
 Upon a day, as he was wont to gon,
 And in the Capitolie anon him hente
 This false Brutus and his other foon,
 And stiked him with bodekins anon 14625
 With many a wound, and thus they let him lie :
 But never gront he at no stroke but on,
 Or elles at two, but if his storie lie.

So manly was this Julius of herte,
 And so wel loved estatly honestee, 14630
 That though his dedly woundes fore finerte
 His mantel over his hippes caste he,
 For no man shulde seen his privetee ;
 And as he lay of dying in a trance,
 And wiste veraily that ded was he, 14635
 Of honestee yet had he remembrance.

Lucan, to thee this storie I recomende,
 And to Sueton and Valerie also,

That of this storie writen word and ende,
 How that to thise gret conquereours two 14640
 Fortune was first a frend and sith a fo.
 No man ne trust upon hire, favour long,
 But have hire in await for evermo,
 Wisse on all thise conquereours strong.

Cresus.

The riche Cresus, whilom King of Lide, 14645
 Of whiche Cresus Cyrus sore him dradde,
 Yet was he caught amiddes all his pride,
 And to be brent men to the fire him ladde,
 But swiche a rain down from the welken shadde
 That slow the fire, and made to him escape; 14650
 But to beware no grace yet he hadde
 Til Fortune on the galwes made him gape.

Whan he escaped was he can not stint
 For to beginne a newe werre again:

¶ 14639. *word and ende*] Dr. Hickes, in his *Gr. A. S.* p. 70, has proposed to read *ord and end*, both here and in *Tro. b. v.* ver. 1663. He has shewn very clearly that *ord and end* was a common Saxon expression for the whole of a thing, the beginning and end of it: but all the mss. that I have examined read *word*, and therefore I have left it in the text, as possibly the old Saxon phrase in Chaucer's time might have been corrupted.

¶ 14645. *Cresus*] In the opening of this story our Author has plainly copied the following passage of his own version of Boethius, b. ii. pro. 2.; "Wisse thou not how *Cresus* King of Lydia, of whiche King Cyrus was ful sore agaste a litel be-fore," &c.: but the greatest part is taken from the *Rom. de la R.* ver. 6847—6912.

Wher as he with his own hand flow this,
Succeeding in thy regne and in thy rest.

The feld of snow, with th' egle of black charis,
Caught with the timered, coloured in the glide,
He brewed this carolaceffe and all this fide; 1469
The wicked neste was werker of this dede,
Not Charles Oliver, that take ay hold
Of trouthe and honour, but of Armoricus
Genilon Oliver, corrupt for mede,
Broughte this worthy king in twiche a brist 1470

★. 14697. *Not Charles Oliver*] Not the Oliver of Charles, [*Charlemagne*] but an Oliver of Armoric, a second Genilon or Ganelon. See ver. 13124, 15233. So this passage is to be understood, which in ed. *Urr.* has been changed to—*Not Charles Oliver*.—But who this Oliver of Bretagne was whom our Author charges as werker of the death of King Petro is not so clear. According to *Adriana*, l. xvii. c. 13, such a charge might most properly be brought against Bertrand de Guesclin, a Breton, afterwards Constable of France, as it was in consequence of a private treaty with him that Petro came to his rest, where he was killed by his brother Henry, and partly (as some said) *con ayuda de Beltrán*. But how he should come to be called Oliver I cannot guess, unless perhaps Chaucer confounded him with Olivier de Clifton, another famous Breton of those times, who was also Constable of France after Bertrand. [Froissart mentions an Olivier de Mauny, nephew to Bertrand du Guesclin, as receiving large rewards from King Henry, vol. i. ch. 245.]—The person meant, whoever he was, must have been sufficiently pointed out at the time by his coat of arms, which is described in ver. 14693, 4. *Th' egle of black in a feld of snow* is plain enough, but the rest of the blazonry I cannot pretend to decipher.

Petro King of Cypre.

O worthy Petro! King of Cypre also,
 That Alexandria wan by high maistrise,
 Ful many an Hethen wroughtest thou ful wo,
 Of which thin owen lieges had envie,
 And for nothing but for thy chivalrie 14705
 They in thy bed han slain thee by the morwe.
 Thus can Fortune hire whele governie and gie,
 And out of joye bringen men to sorwe.

Barnabo Viscount.

Of Milane grete Barnabo Viscount,
 God of delit, and scourge of Lumbardie, 14710
 Why shuld I not thin infortune account,
 Sith in estat thou clomben were so high?
 Thy brothers sone, that was thy double allie,

✧. 14701: *Petro King of Cypre*] Concerning the taking of Alexandria by this prince, and his other exploits, see the note on ver. 51, and the authors there cited. He was assassinated in 1369, *Acad. des Ins. t. xx. p. 439.*

✧. 14709. *Barnabo Viscount*] Barnabo Visconti, Duke of Milan, was deposed by his nephew, and thrown into prison, where he died in 1385. — I did not attend to this circumstance when I stated the insurrection of Strawe in 1381 as the latest historical fact mentioned in these Tales, *Discourse*, &c. n. 6. The death of Barnabo was certainly later. Fortunately however this difference of four years has no other consequence than that it makes the supposed date of the pilgrimage in 1383, which was before very doubtful, still more improbable. The Knight might as probably be upon a pilgrimage in 1387 as in 1383, according to the precedent of Sir Mathew de Gourney. See note on ver. 43.

For he thy neveu was and fone in lawe,
 Within his prison made he thee to die, 14715
 But why ne how nat that thou were slawe.

Hugelin of Pise.

Of the Erl Hugelin of Pise the lagour
 Ther may no tongue tellen for pitee.
 But lital out of Pise stant a tour;
 In whiche tour in prison yput was he, 14720
 And with him ben his lital children thre,
 The eldest scarcely five yere was of age:
 Alas! Fortune, it was gret crueltee
 Swiche briddes for to put in swiche a cage.

Dampned was he to die in that prison, 14725
 For Roger which that Bishop was of Pise
 Had on him made a false suggestion,
 Thurgh which the peple gan upon him rise,
 And put him in prison in swiche a wise
 As ye han herd; and mete and drinke he had 14730
 So smale, that wel unnethe it may suffise,
 And therwithal it was ful poure and bad.

And on a day befell that in that houre
 Whan that his mete wont was to be brought
 The gailer shette the dores of the toure; 14735
 He heerd it wel, but he spake right nought:
 And in his herte anon ther fell a thought

¶ 14717. *Hugelin of Pise*] Chaucer himself has referred us to Dante for the original of this tragedy. See *Inferno*, c. xxxiii.

That they for hunger wolden do him dien :
Alas ! quod he, alas that I was wrought !
Therwith the teres fellen fro his eyen. I474

His yonge sone, that thre yere was of age,
Unto him said, Fader, why do ye wepe ?
Whan will the gailer bringen our potage ?
Is ther no morsel bred that ye do kepe ?
I am so hungry that I may not slepe. I474
Now wolde God that I might slepen ever,
Than shuld not hunger in my wombe crepe ;
Ther n'is no thing sauf bred that me were lever.

Thus day by day this childe began to crie,
Til in his fadres barme adoun it lay, I475
And saide, Farewel, fader, I mote die ;
And kist his fader, and dide the same day.
And whan the woful fader did it sey
For wo his armes two he gan to bite,
And saide, Alas ! Fortune, and wala wa ! I475
Thy false whele my wo all may I wite.

His children wenden that for hunger it was
That he his armes gnawe, and not for wo,
And sayden, Fader, do not so, alas !
But rather ete the flesh upon us two : I476
Our flesh thou yaf us, take our flesh us fro,
And ete ynough. Right thus they to him seide,
And after that, within a day or two,
They laide hem in his lappe adoun and deide.

Himself dispeired eke for hunger starf. 14765
 Thus ended is this mighty Erl of Pise :
 From high estat Fortune away him carf.
 Of this tragedie it ought ynough suffice ;
 Who so wol here it in a longer wise
 Redeth the grete poete of Itaille 14770
 That highte Dante, for he can it devise
 Fro point to point ; not o word wol he faille. 14775

v. 14765, 6.] These two verses in the editt. have been trans-
 posed, to the confusion of the sense as well as of the metre.

CONTENTS.

	Page
The Frankeleines Prologue,	5
The Frankeleines Tale,	8
The Doctoures Prologue,	45
The Doctoures Tale,	<i>ib.</i>
The Pardoneres Prologue,	56
The Pardoneres Tale,	59
The Shipmannes Prologue,	85
The Shipmannes Tale,	86
The Prioreffes Prologue,	103
The Prioreffes Tale,	104
Prologue to Sire Thopas,	113
The Rime of Sire Thopas,	114
Prologue to Melibeus,	127
The Tale of Melibeus,	130
The Monkes Prologue,	200
The Monkes Tale,	204

From the APOLLO PRESS,
by the MARTINS,
Nov. 9. 1782.

END OF VOLUME FOURTH.



100

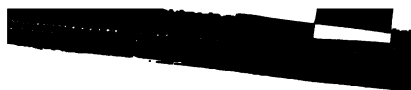
100













Aug - 3 1928

